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We wanted hostages, say terrorists

Family killed in massacre at the temple

By Christopher Walker and Paul Wilkinson

THREE generations of a single family were among the British victims of the Luxor massacre, it emerged yesterday as the full extent of the Islamic terrorists' brutality in killing 58 foreign tourists became clear.

Five-year-old Shaunnah Turner, her mother Karina and grandmother Joan, from Ripponden, West Yorkshire, were on the third day of their holiday when they were murdered outside the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut.

Yesterday their bodies were flown to a Cairo mortuary to await repatriation along with the other massacre victims, including George and Ivy Wigham from Swanley in Kent and Sylvia Wilder, a 26-year-old air stewardess from the South East of England.

They had been killed as part of an operation by the Islamic group Al-Gamaa al-Islamiya in an attempt to force the release of its spiritual leader Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, who is in jail in America for plotting to blow up the World Trade Centre in New York.

Admitting responsibility for the massacre yesterday, the group said that it had intended to seize hostages. But witnesses to the three-hour shoot-out said the six gunmen had made no attempt to take captives. They had climbed from their car and immediately fired at tourists with automatic weapons, then stabbed some of their victims to make sure they were dead.

Rosemarie Doussé, a Swiss survivor, said: "They shot everyone in the arms and legs.



Joan Turner, ran agency caring for the elderly

Then they killed everyone who was alive with a shot to the head." And Mahmoud al-Rawi, a bus driver wounded in the attack, said: "They came into the temple shooting. When their clips ran out, they took our knives and started slaughtering people."

Gamaa's admission that it carried out the attack came as President Mubarak visited the massacre site and promised action within 48 hours to tighten security at all his country's important tourist sites. He criticised his ministers for the lax security, and said that heads would roll. "The area is full of tourists and you tell me police are two kilometres away. This is a joke of strategy." Within hours, the Security Minister Hassan el-Alfi had resigned.

The rapid response was an indication of how seriously the Government regards the terrorist threat to its international reputation and tourism industry. But it was not

enough to deter tour operators from all over the world pulling their clients out of the country and hundreds of Britons arrived home early yesterday.

Thomson, Britain's biggest tour operator, said that it was bringing back all its holiday-makers in Egypt and would not be flying there again this month. Other big companies took a similar approach, but they found resistance from customers angry about being forced to go home against their wishes.

Many felt that the companies — and the Foreign Office, which advised travellers to avoid the Luxor area — were over-reacting and that they should have been given the option of staying. Their complaint was borne out by Thomas Cook, which said that only two of its 140 clients in Egypt had decided to come home. The company intended to go ahead with its Nile Discovery Tour flight on Saturday, although the tour would avoid the Luxor area.

The son of two of the British victims was, however, alarmed by the terrorist threat and had tried to persuade his parents to change their destination. Ivy Wigham, 71, and her husband George, 69, had flown out to Egypt last Thursday for a celebration holiday after Mrs Wigham completed an Open University course.

Their son, Paul, said that he had been concerned about the murder of nine Germans on a tour bus outside the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in September and had urged his parents to reconsider. "We said to



Karina Turner with her daughter Shaunnah. They had been in Egypt for three days

them to get their agents to find them another holiday, but they said they would be all right. They just liked the idea of going down the Nile."

As friends of the Wighams in Kent were mourning the couple, so the people of the Yorkshire village of Ripponden were remembering Shaunnah Turner and her family. A special assembly was held at St Mary's Infants School and a photograph was put on display by her friends.

Shaunnah had gone on holiday with her 24-year-old mother, an air stewardess, and her grandmother, who ran a care agency for the elderly and disabled. The three had shared their home with Shaunnah's aunt, Deborah, the sole surviving member of the family. Ms Turner, a 30-year-old Salford University student, said: "I've lost my mother and my sister and my beautiful niece. I'm absolutely distraught. I've lost every-

thing." The sixth British victim was also an air stewardess, Sylvia Wilder, who held dual British and Bulgarian nationality, had worked for Monarch Airlines for six months. She was based at Gatwick and lived in the South East, but the airline did not know whether she was married or had children.

Victims like sheep, page 2
Tourists' anger, page 3
Simon Jenkins, page 22

US build-up over Iraq as Russia says peace at hand

By Tom Rhodes and Michael Binyon

AMERICA stepped up the pressure on President Saddam Hussein yesterday as Russia announced that it had worked out a plan to end peacefully the crisis between Iraq and the United Nations.

The US reinforced its number of warplanes in the Gulf in response to Iraq's "offensive posture". The Pentagon said that Iraq's air defences were "extremely active" and appeared to be pointing threateningly at allied flights. "We are reacting in part to a graver threat we spot in the area," Ken Bacon, the department spokesman said.

The new deployment would include six F117A Stealth bombers, to be positioned in Kuwait, and six cruise missile-carrying B52 bombers to be stationed on Diego Garcia, the British dependent territory in the Indian Ocean.

An additional force of 30 aircraft, including F15 and F16 fighters as well as two B1 bombers was standing ready to fly to Bahrain if requested by the American commander in the Gulf. As many as six KC135 airborne tankers also were being sent.

The Pentagon statement came after Tariq Aziz, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, flew unexpectedly to Moscow for talks with President Yeltsin and Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister.

Mr Primakov said afterwards: "As a result of these talks, a specific programme has been worked out which, we believe, allows us to avoid military confrontation and the use of military methods, and to move towards liquidating this crisis, of course with Iraq fulfilling the corresponding UN Security Council resolutions."

He gave no details of the

plan and there was no word from the Iraqi delegation. Mr Primakov said Mr Yeltsin had urged him to meet the US, French and British foreign ministers today and that, if he could not, he would speak to them by telephone.

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, dropped a trip to Agra from her India travel schedule today to continue to pursue intensive contacts with her counterparts from Britain, France and Russia. James Rubin, her spokesman, said it had not been decided whether she would meet the foreign ministers of those countries somewhere in Europe for talks on resolving the standoff with Iraq.

There has been no decision at this point about any meeting," he said, responding to reports that Mr Primakov, Hubert Vedrine, the French Foreign Minister, and Robin Cook would meet today in Geneva.

Britain yesterday gave a warning that Iraq probably still had enough missiles and chemical and biological weapons to be able to launch an attack on Israel or Saudi Arabia "within days".

According to a Whitehall Intelligence assessment, declassified yesterday by the Foreign Office, the possibility that Saddam retains a handful of largely completed missiles and chemical and biological weapons "cannot not be ruled out".

"Provided it still has key components — and that is unclear — Iraq could within a few months build, with little risk of detection, missiles capable of hitting Israel and key targets in Saudi Arabia," the assessment said.

Primakov progress, page 16

Laura Ashley's chief is fired

Ann Iverson has been fired as chief executive of Laura Ashley, the troubled fashion and furnishings retailer, after just 30 months in the job and will receive £450,000 compensation for loss of office.

The company's finance director is also set to leave as soon as a replacement is found. Page 27

Howard backed

The public strongly supported the tough crime policies initiated by Michael Howard as Home Secretary the latest British Social Attitudes report found. Page 11

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Royal aircraft makes emergency landing as engines run out of oil

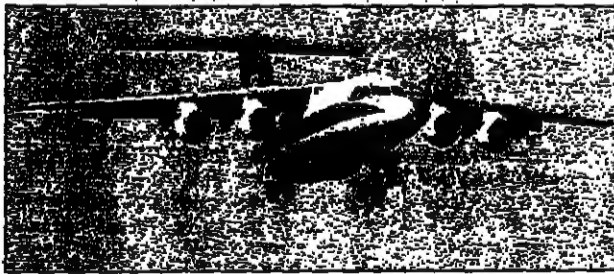
By Michael Evans and Alan Hamilton

AN AIRCRAFT of the Royal Flight was forced to make an emergency landing when three out of its four engines failed after a catastrophic fall in oil pressure.

The drama occurred during a training flight, when a senior RAF instructor was on board with a trainee captain and a flight engineer. The Duke of York had travelled as a passenger on the BAe 146 only a few days earlier.

When the pilot landed at Stansted, Essex, it was discovered that even the fourth engine was in trouble. Low oil pressure warnings lights were showing on three of the engines and full emergency measures were in place as the plane came in to land.

An investigation has been under way since the incident and it has emerged that none of the oil seals had been replaced during routine maintenance work carried out by a



A BAe 146 of the Royal Flight. "Oil was pouring out"

private contractor, FRA Serco. "Oil was just pouring out of the engine," an MoD official said.

The maintenance work had been carried out after the Duke's flight in the aircraft, which is one of three attached to No 32 (The Royal) Squadron, based at RAF Northolt, west of London.

The BAe 146s are used by the Queen, members of the Royal Family, the Prime Minister and other Cabinet ministers. A BAe 146 brought back the coffin of the Princess of Wales to Northolt from Paris

on August 31. The Queen returned with other members of the Royal Family from Balmoral on a BAe 146 to attend the Princess's funeral and the Prince of Wales flew in one during a nine-day tour of the former republics of Soviet central Asia earlier this year.

The MoD said the aircraft had operated properly for the Duke of York's flight. "The problem only arose after the plane had been in for modest maintenance work," an RAF official said.

The plane took off from Northolt for the training flight

on November 6. The MoD emphasised that the trainee captain was a fully qualified pilot, but had just joined No 32 Squadron.

Fifteen minutes into the sortie, the three-man crew observed "fluctuations" in all the engine oil quantity indicators. "They saw there was a problem in all the engines and immediately initiated a return to base," the MoD official said.

However, a low oil pressure warning light started to flash on one of the engines, which was immediately shut down. The pilot sent out a Mayday call and decided to head for Stansted, the nearest airport.

Two more oil pressure warning lights started to flash and the pilot was forced to reduce the power on two other engines to "flight idle", which provides only minimum power.

Before landing, the pilot shut down a second engine, then the third one as the plane taxied on the runway.



"Ahh! A hospital bed! Now I haven't seen one of these for a very long time"

Waiting lists rise by 1,000 a week

Hospital waiting lists in England are now growing by more than 1,000 patients a week, forcing the Government to water down its election promise to cut them quickly by 100,000.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, has managed to raise £5 million from savings on NHS red tape to set up new units to oversee greater efficiency by health authorities. Page 9

Audience makes Tchaikovsky's 1812 go pop

By Russell Jenkins

THE AUDIENCE at a performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture in Manchester next week may be more than usually tense as the triumphant climax of the work approaches.

Just before the concert hall normally echoes to the crash of cannon fire while the Russian and French national anthems battle it out, next week's audience in the Bridgewater Hall will be waiting for their cue from Timothy Reynish, the conductor, to provide the sound themselves — by bursting 4,000 inflated paper bags.

Tchaikovsky specified the cannon

shots to represent the triumphant Russian guns firing as Napoleon and his troops were forced to retreat from Moscow in the winter of 1812. But Mr Reynish, who is head of the wind and percussion school at The Royal Northern College of Music, decided that cannon would be an unnecessarily expensive luxury at the Prom'n'Aid Concert designed to raise funds for the British Red Cross.

He got the paper bags, some bearing the legend "Thank you — call again", from his local newsagent, so they have no specific percussive properties. They will be distributed to members of the full-house audience as they enter the

auditorium. Mr Reynish aims to separate the audience into four groups and then briefly rehearse them in the art of blowing up a paper bag silently.

"It's a problem for the conductor, co-ordinating it all, because you have 140 musicians on stage and 2,000 in the audience. It is quite a problem synchronising 4,000 paper bags," he said, adding: "I think we are all excited and fired up about it. The climax will be a nervous time. If we have 2,000 people being nervous at the same time, we will be sure to get the adrenalin flowing."

Tchaikovsky, who claimed he wrote the overture with "no warm feelings"

intended it to be performed in a Moscow square with a large orchestra, military band and cathedral bells as well as the cannon shots. But the first performance was on August 20, 1882, in a hall specially constructed for the Moscow Exhibition.

Dr Rosemary Williamson, librarian at The Royal Northern College, said: "The cannons were included in the original performance. They were meant to commemorate the victory of Russia over Napoleon in 1812. It will be very interesting to hear the effect of paper bags. It sounds like it's going to be a really fun occasion that may well set a precedent."



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Scenes from a holiday film that turned into a horror: these pictures, taken by a British tourist, show Egyptian security forces in action after the massacre while shocked survivors wait near by

'They pulled victims on floor like sheep'

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER,
PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON
AND DANIEL MCGRORY

AT LEAST four of the gunmen were hiding inside the Temple up to an hour before the ambush began, witnesses said last night. Disguised in the black uniform of police, they waited patiently for the first tourist buses of the day to arrive in the courtyard. Two more terrorists were spotted waiting on the steps outside.

Other witnesses remember seeing at least two men appear from a

white car brandishing guns as the shooting began. There was mounting criticism over how long it took Egyptian security teams to reach the area and for rescuers to help the seriously wounded. Many of the injured say they lay cowering in fear for an hour or more.

The first victims, tour groups from Germany, Japan and Switzerland, were milling around in the courtyard when two men were seen pulling weapons from under their jackets. Badawy Ahmed Salem, 33, a taxi driver, said the gunmen sprayed automatic fire and shout-

ing slogans. Some victims were made to kneel before they were shot, he said. "They were pulling tourists like sheep on the floor and slaughtering them. We were up to our knees in blood."

As well as wearing the winter garb of the police, the terrorists had red bandanas on which was written: "We will fight until death."

In the first minutes, the gunmen deliberately targeted the few police officers on duty before concentrating their attention on the hundreds of innocent bystanders and street vendors. Witnesses told how the

killers walked between the fallen bodies, stabbing at them with knives and firing at those who were still alive. Among the first victims were a Japanese honeymoon couple, Eiichi and Tomomi Kishida, who were married ten days ago.

The attack continued unabated for 30 minutes, say survivors. Between 30 to 90 minutes later, depending on which witness account is to be believed, soldiers equipped with AK 47 rifles and grenade launchers arrived and began to fan out. Some of the

killers were believed to have escaped to nearby graveyard. Some were seen hijacking passing cars to escape.

One group commandeered a bus with three French tourists on board. The driver was too distraught to drive so one of the terrorists took the wheel. They were followed not only by soldiers but also by unarmed Egyptians incensed by what they had seen. The terrorists drove as far as the derelict Christian monastery of Dar Moharb where they abandoned the bus and set off on foot,

having killed the French tourists. Mrs Eman Abdelaziz, a local English teacher, whose husband is a guide at the temple said: "The people from Luxor who followed them say that in the end the terrorists killed each other, with the last one killing himself."

"When they escaped into the mountains, one of the terrorists was shot by a soldier and fell down. One of the other terrorists then came back and shot him dead so that he would not be taken and say anything about them."

The people from the West Bank

here were very brave against the criminals. They followed them even though they had no weapons."

From beginning to end, the shoot-out is estimated to have lasted three hours. There was then another delay until rescue vehicles could reach the scene. Although authorities claim that six gunmen were killed, a number of witnesses put their total at 11. In a claim of responsibility, the al-Gamaa al-Islamiya (Islamic Group) said that 15 members were in the ambush, whose initial aim was alleged to have been to take hostages.

Factional splits make security task harder

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER AND TUNKU VARADARAJAN

THE admission yesterday that the Luxor tourist massacre was the responsibility of al-Gamaa al-Islamiya (The Islamic Group) came as Egypt's most active Muslim extremist group is beginning to disintegrate.

The splits — both between factions inside Egypt and between the group's home-based fighters and exiled leaders — are seen by Western security experts as making the job of the authorities more difficult. On the day that 53 tourists were shot dead at the temple of Queen Hatshepsut, 300 miles away in a court outside Cairo, a leading member of the group was telling reporters that his offer of a ceasefire, first hinted at in July, still stood.

The original call was seen by some observers as recognition that the attempt to trans-

form Egyptian society by force had failed. But some Egyptian security officials saw it as a trick to try and lift the relentless security clamp-down, which has included torture and rough justice.

The feelers for peace put out by the jailed members of the group's leadership were rejected, not only by President Mubarak, but also by members still at large.

The group was originally founded in the late 1970s by radical Muslim theologians led by Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, whose freedom from jail in the United States was claimed by al-Gamaa as the motivation behind the Luxor ambush.

The blind Egyptian sheikh is in New York's Metropolitan Correctional Institute, serving a life sentence for "seditious conspiracy". He

has a burning hatred of the West and a self-appointed mission to "destroy" America. Abdel-Rahman, along with nine other co-conspirators, was convicted in 1995 of planning to wage a war of urban terrorism against the United States; five bombs were intended to explode in and around New York on one day. Abdel-Rahman was also convicted of conspiring to assassinate President Mubarak in the United States in 1993.

In 1993, six people were killed in the bombing of the World Trade Centre, in New York. Although the sheikh himself was not charged in that case, four of the men convicted of the bombing professed to be followers of Abdel-Rahman.

Many original members of al-Gamaa group are among



Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, the group's leader

the 15,000 supporters and sympathisers now behind bars in Egypt or the more than 50 executed.

At the outset of its campaign in 1992, the group was much more disciplined than

today. Those still at large are particularly ruthless. Rural members of the security forces, tourists and Egypt's Coptic Christians have become the main targets of the terrorists.

Commons pledges to resist terrorism

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

MINISTERS and MPs speaking in the House of Commons, expressed their sympathies and condolences to the families bereaved by the Luxor massacre.

Doug Henderson, the Foreign Office Minister, said the Government would work with the Egyptian authorities to do everything it could to help to minimise risks for travellers and make "every effort" in the international fight against terrorism.

He said: "On behalf of the Government and, I am sure, on behalf of all members of this House, I extend my heartfelt sympathies to the families bereaved by this atrocity and to those injured."

He said the Prime Minister, who spoke to President Mubarak on Monday afternoon, had "expressed his condolences and our support in

the fight against terrorism".

Crispin Blunt, Tory MP for Reigate and special adviser to Malcolm Rifkind, the former Defence Secretary, urged the Government to do everything it could to protect the Egyptian tourist industry. He said the Government should give out enough information so that travellers could understand the risks of terrorism. But he added: "Don't encourage a wholly unnecessary panic which is what seems to have happened."

Mr Henderson said: "We have a responsibility to provide advice to British citizens and British tourists on the dangers they may face when they travel. Our assessment is that there are serious dangers in Egypt and have been for some time."

Michael Howard, Shadow Foreign Secretary, said he

wished to associate the Opposition with the sympathy the minister expressed "to the families of the victims of this brutal attack and also to the sympathy extended to the Government of Egypt".

Christine McCafferty, the Labour MP for Calder Valley, whose constituents included the three dead members of the Turner family, said: "I welcome the minister's message of condolence for the family and would like to be associated with them. I also welcome your unequivocal condemnation of terrorism."

Michael Fallon, the Tory MP for Sevenoaks who represented two other Britons who died, George and Ivy Wigham, spoke of "the widespread shock and grief in Swanley that a dream holiday for two pensioners should have ended in murder."

TIME FOR BED

VERY, VERY FUNNY

"Time For Bed is as funny and clever as one would expect but it is tender too — with his first novel David Baddiel goes straight into the first eleven of young contemporary British novelists" — Nick Hornby

"...a richly observant and blisteringly funny, fabulously well-executed novel" — Kate Saunders, *Sunday Express*

"Entertaining and enjoyable...the lyrical side of laddism" — TLS

DAVID BADDIEL

OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK

Tourists advised to stay away

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Egyptian Minister of Tourism called at the Foreign Office yesterday for talks with Baroness Symons. Mamdouh el-Beigui expressed his Government's sorrow and condolences and discussed Egypt's readiness to help the thousands of tourists seeking a swift return home.

His visit was proposed before the Luxor massacre. Musa al-Amr, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, also telephoned Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, to convey a message of sympathy to the victims' relatives.

The Foreign Office said that its emergency response team

had received around 1,000 calls by mid-morning to the lines set up to help those seeking information or concerned about relatives.

The Foreign Office issued revised travel advice detailing the "major incident" near Luxor and saying that this suggested the threat to tourists visiting Upper Egypt had increased. British visitors were advised to exercise "great caution" when visiting the area of the Nile valley south of, and including, Minya province. It added: "They are strongly advised to avoid the Luxor area until further notice." Foreign Office officials

said they had rushed out the notice as soon as the details of the massacre became clear.

It was sent to all travel agents and tour organisers who normally request guidance on the level of risk in any of the main tourist destinations. Travel advice is based on information sent to London by British embassies abroad.

It is drawn up in consultation with consuls, who have to deal with any emergencies, and includes a political assessment of any instability or terrorist threat.

Not all tourist destinations are covered, and advice is issued only if the situation

appears unstable. The Foreign Office said it was impossible to predict any outbreak of violence, and a blanket warning to keep away was often resented by countries whose economies depend largely on tourism.

The Foreign Office refuses to take responsibility for individual visits and therefore will not guarantee anyone's safety, preferring to outline the risks and leave decisions to travellers. However, most advice echoes the statement issued on Egypt yesterday: "Visitors to all other parts of Egypt, including Cairo, the Red Sea and Sinai, are advised to be vigilant and to respect any advice from the local security authorities."

MATTHEW PARRIS IS ON PAGE 15

CHAT
AS LONG
AS YOU LIKE
FOR 50P

Now Sundays as well as Saturdays
(Our 50p offer just got bigger)

Would you like more time for those long, relaxed conversations at any time, any weekend? Well, here's your chance... because from 1st November, our 50p offer covers the whole weekend. Imagine, every UK long-distance call every Saturday and Sunday, during November and December will be yours at normal unit.

It couldn't be... when you can spend the whole day as long as you like without paying a penny more. This unique offer is just one of the many great offers we have for you. You can find out more on our website or by calling 0800 555 555.

CALL 0800 555 555
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www.0800555555.co.uk

British to
Holiday comp
accused of pan



Adrift brings 2
travel firms co

Golfers mourn



British tourists angry at leaving Luxor

Holiday companies accused of panicking

BRITISH holidaymakers were angry yesterday that they were being flown out of Luxor after the terrorist massacre. They said that the Foreign Office and tour companies had overreacted.

Convoys of coaches took visitors to Luxor airport as tour operators sent charter flights to evacuate the area. The bus came in their scores from such companies as Thomson, Kuoni and Golden Joy Holidays. Most big tour firms decided to pull out, only some of the small independent operators giving their clients the chance to stay on.

One group of tourists had arrived only last night for a two-week tour of the region and were going back to London within 12 hours. Jenny Reynolds, from Birmingham, was with her 85-year-old mother, Eileen Reynolds. "It's just pure panic," Dr Reynolds said. "We were asked at Heathrow last night if we wanted to go, and we all said yes."

Geoff Gregg of Luton, Bedfordshire, said: "I'm absolutely furious with the Foreign Office. What message will we be sending to the terrorists if the British pull out?"

Gemma and Nick Wells, from Crowborough, East Sussex, said they had travelled around the world and did not want to return home. Mr Wells said: "As soon as the situation clears, I'll be the first to come back."

Tourists had been advised to remain inside their hotels and boats after the attack at the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut. But a handful were mingling with local Egyptians outside the Luxor city council office. Many tourists spoke of their respect for the Egyptian people, saying that they had done much to ease the situation.

Troops lined the El Nil Corniche and were positioned outside hotels, on rooftops, on terraces and alongside the cruisers that lined the east bank of the Nile. It soon became clear that they were there not to protect visitors but for the arrival of President Mubarak's cavalcade, which roared down the street in the



Many Britons, unhappy at their forced repatriation, were determined to return, reports David Hannah

haze and dust of the late morning. As the President left Luxor after a meeting with bazaar traders, the troops and security forces left too, leaving the streets to return to a more normal situation and more tourists to emerge from their hotels.

In the ancient temples on the east bank of the river and the Great Valley of the Kings on the west bank, only a few white-haired tourists were seen among the giant ancient pillars. Their main source of information had come only from telephone calls home.

Steven Coulson, 45, from For-

girlfriend and I have only just arrived and are insisting on staying put. We take the view that this was a one-off incident. It is not as if there is a war on here and that we could be next."

Lesley Anderson, a nurse from Hedon, East Yorkshire, was on holiday with her mother, Jean Brownlee, and were upset with tour operators for cutting their holiday short by a day. She said: "It is pandemonium. The hotel foyers are full of people trying to check out. We don't feel at any risk, but we are being made to go home, and we think that is wrong."

But two young British women spoke of their fear at having to stay another night before they could catch a flight home. "We're trapped and terrified," said Jane Bussey, 23, from Bishop Auckland in Co Durham.

"We're staying in a £2-a-night pension down a little back street in the centre of town. It's not guarded and the people running it don't seem to realise how serious the situation is. We've been desperate to get out since we heard of the massacre."

During the day she and Tracy Jackson stay in the lobby of a well-guarded three-star hotel, but they do not have enough money to sleep there.

Ms Bussey, an accounts clerk, said: "Luxor is like a city under siege. The police have got helicopters flying overhead, the police are patrolling the river and there are police cars everywhere, with roadblocks."

As night fell, the streets were quiet, the horse-and-trap drivers lined up without custom, the glittering bazaar stalls were becoming deserted. Most of the luxury cruisers remained tied up, their doors locked. Only a few white-sailed fishing boats plied their way from shore to shore.

We're furious with the Foreign Office. What message will we send to terrorists if we pull out?

tefract, who is studying Egyptology at Manchester University, was with ten other Britons in the town and did not plan to leave. He said: "The shooting has shaken everyone up. People don't know whether to stay or go. British people are hoping to be moved out, but independent travellers like me don't know what to do. Luxor is like a ghost town. Everyone is terrified and wants to get out. I won't be leaving, though."

"The Egyptian people are very angry and embarrassed about what has happened. They feel the attack was against them as well as the tourists." One Egyptian said that many of the local people wanted to burn the bodies of the gunmen.

Airlift brings 2,000 home as travel firms count the cost

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND PAUL WHITTAKER

ELEVEN empty charter aircraft flew to Egypt yesterday to bring home an estimated 2,000 British holidaymakers, including nearly 1,300 from the city of Luxor.

Every available seat on scheduled and pre-arranged charter flights was booked to ensure that no-one was forced to remain in Egypt against their wishes. Senior travel industry figures said it was the largest single peace-time evacuation.

The first of the relieved tourists arrived at Heathrow airport yesterday evening to be reunited with relatives who had waited for 24 hours for confirmation of their safety. More than 100 people on an over-filled holiday were flown

home by Egypt Air after being forced to cut short their stay. Nessie Brisbane, 72, from Falkirk, said: "We were on our way in a tour bus to the Valley of the Queens. We were told to stay where we were until a police escort came. We were whisked away to our hotel and told we had to leave Luxor as soon as possible."

The Cosmos holiday company said it was bringing all its customers in the area back to Britain, with sister company Monarch having arranged two flights out of Luxor. Airways said it was arranging to fly home its 351 holidaymakers in the Luxor area. It would fly about 600 holidaymakers to Manchester and Gatwick today — 351

Airours clients, plus those of Golden Joy, Cosmos, First Choice and Aztec. Most tour operators have promised full refunds for holidays cut short.

Several companies have cancelled flights to Egypt later in the week and some operators have cancelled holidays in Egypt for the rest of the year at the busiest time.

Thomson, Britain's biggest holiday company, said it was cancelling its three Egypt-bound flights yesterday. A spokesman said: "All those in Egypt at present are being given the option of coming home early."

Many of the thousands of tourists forced to cut short their holidays had booked with small, up-market opera-



Rosemarie Dousse recovering in hospital in Cairo yesterday. She smeared herself with blood and played dead

Survivor tells of methodical killing

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER
MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

A SURVIVOR of the massacre told yesterday how the gunmen had methodically finished off their victims. Rosemarie Dousse said: "They shot everyone in the arms and legs. Then they killed everyone who was alive with a shot to the head."

Mrs Dousse, a Swiss, said that she had survived only because she was covered by the bodies of two other tourists killed instantly when her group was first fired upon. She was shot in the arms and legs, but soaked her headscarf

in blood and smeared herself with it, then pretended she was dead when they returned. "They kept on coming back, the terrorists, they were dancing, singing: 'Allah, Allah.'"

She added: "They took all the young women, the girls, and disappeared with them. I do not know where they went with the women, but they hurt them, we could hear screams of pain."

An Egyptian driver, Haggag al-Nahas, said that he had dropped off a busload of tourists at the temple when the gunmen charged. "There were six of them, five in police uniforms and another wearing jeans, who came aboard and

told me to drive them away from the temple. So I drove them round and round. They had the walkie-talkies of the policemen they had killed, so they could hear everything that was going on."

Egyptians reacted with fury to the massacre. "They should take a terrorist in a public square and cut him up into tiny pieces to set an example," said Azza Abdel-Naby, a 27-year-old Cairo nurse.

In Luxor, villagers spat on the bodies of the six gunmen as they were being carried to waiting ambulances. "Luxor lives on tourism. If that goes, there is nothing," said Magdi Wassef, a 32-year-old hotel waiter.

Nurse on holiday helped out at hospital

By DANIEL MCGRODY

A BRITISH nurse holidaying in Luxor was among those who helped to cope with the scores of dead and dying as they were brought to the city's general hospital.

For ten hours Sue Kelly worked in the overflowing emergency ward treating the wounds of tourists who described to her how they had been stabbed and shot.

"There was such confusion that the dead bodies were just left next to the injured who were crying out for help," she said. "All around there were friends and family pushing between us, all trying to find their loved ones. It was so cruel and harrowing to watch. You felt helpless in the face of such suffering."

Mrs Kelly, a divorcee from Haywards Heath in Sussex and a regular visitor to Luxor, was asked to go to the hospital by the manager of her hotel. She said: "It was obvious that many had been shot at close range, and others had been stabbed. They told me how the terrorists had run among them, shouting and slashing at them with knives. One man almost had his head severed. So many of those being brought in were beyond help."

She saw victims who had their stomachs cleaved open by stab wounds. "It looked as if they had been executed rather than caught up in some random attack. The floors were running in blood."



Sue Kelly: "It was so cruel and harrowing"

Golfers mourn their friends

By PETER FOSTER
AND DANIEL MCGRODY

THE veterans' section of Lullington Golf Club in Kent is in mourning over the death of a popular member and his wife in the Luxor massacre.

Last Thursday two of their oldest members set off with their wives for a winter holiday in Egypt. David Middleton and his wife Sheila survived the attack by Islamic terrorists. Their close friends George and Ivy Wigham lost their lives.

Yesterday, Brian Vallance, the secretary of Lullington Golf Club, said the two men had partnered each other in competitions for nearly 20 years. "They played together in the local league and came up to the club three or four times a week together. They were both charming people and George will be sorely missed," he said.

The week before leaving for Egypt the veterans group discussed the trip over coffee and sandwiches which they always shared after golf. "George was fatalistic about the dangers," Alan Philpott, the veterans' treasurer, said. "If you're going to be killed,



George and Ivy Wigham: their son Paul told them that they should take bullet-proof vests to Egypt



you're going to be killed' was what George always used to say. David was much more apprehensive and decided to take all the necessary precautions."

Paul Wigham tried to persuade his parents against their plans to sail down the Nile for their dream holiday because of the dangers.

After hearing how gunmen callously executed tour groups they found at the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut, he was haunted by the thought they too had been shot at point-blank range. "I just get the same picture

of my mother and father being forced to kneel down while someone machine-guns them to death. I am a believer in non-violence. I think it is quite appalling they should treat innocent people in this way, quite appalling."

The 45-year-old computer consultant told how his parents were just two days into a holiday that was to be a celebration of his mother finishing her Open University degree. They were undaunted by reports of terrorist attacks and were determined to enjoy their cruise with the Middletons.

Friends and family yesterday described George, 69, and Ivy, 71, from Swanley in Kent, as "a devoted couple who lived for each other, their children and their two grandchildren."

Mr Wigham said: "For all their lives they have been careful. My mother, in particular, did not like doing risky things and it seemed to me they should have cancelled. But I could not talk them out of it."

"I actually said 'You should take some bullet-proof vests along with you'. I was terribly worried. I felt after the last incident that they should have made more of an effort to cancel."

"But my father was getting on a bit. He was 69 and they wanted to see the tombs before they died. I feel very sad. They were such wonderful parents, giving, gentle people."

Mr Wigham said that Foreign Office diplomats had been of little help and it was only when he telephoned a number in Egypt that he was told his parents were among the victims.

Their daughter, Angela, and her two young daughters were last night said to be distraught.

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Despite its name, stag hunting is not confined to the male of the species.

Hinds are hunted too, sometimes when they are pregnant or with a calf at heel.

Stag or hind, the end is the same. A free wild animal is hunted to death.

The RSPCA has long campaigned against all hunting with dogs.

In areas where deer need culling it is more efficient and more humane for them

to be shot by a marksman.

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And the vast majority of the people in this country agree with us.

A Private Member's Bill seeking to ban hunting with dogs comes before Parliament on November 28th.

A MORI poll taken in October 1997 shows that 73% of people support the Bill. We want to turn that overwhelming weight of public opinion into legislation.

The 28th is a Friday when many MPs will be back in

their constituencies.

We want you to persuade them to stay in the House and vote to end this cruel 'sport' once and for all.

You can write to your MP direct at the House of Commons, or call the RSPCA on 01403 223284 (9-5 weekdays) and we'll send you a campaign pack.

And if you need further motivation, look again at the stag in the picture.

Look him in the eye.

And tell him you can't be bothered.



Ban hunting with dogs.

THE AIMS OF THE RSPCA ARE TO PREVENT CRUELTY AND PROMOTE KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.



Crowning moment for the royal survivors

THE SO MANY EMPLOYERS ARE NO LONGER IN THE PINK.

FINANCIAL APPOINTMENTS

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Crowning moment for the royal survivors

Alan Hamilton surveys a reunion of monarchs for the Queen's anniversary

HEREDITARY monarchy may not grip the popular imagination as it once did, but there will be as many crowned heads at the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh's golden-wedding anniversary tomorrow as there were at their marriage service.

Some of them, admittedly, are now more deposed than reigning. In 50 years, some monarchs have lost their thrones, some have regained them and some still wait for the telephone to ring.

The guest list for the thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey includes eight crowned heads and their heirs, which Buckingham Palace officials believe is an unprecedented gathering, at least since the days when Victoria's relations used to assemble at her feet at Balmoral.

Stable thrones will be represented at the Abbey, including the present hereditary heads of state of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, Belgium and The Netherlands. Their parents and grandparents were wedding guests half a century ago.

There are two newcomers, the royal families of Spain and Jordan, absent from the original feast. Spain was still in its Franco period, with the throne in abeyance, and Jordan was then still Transjordan, newly created out of the British Palestine mandate with King Abdullah as its new head of state. King Juan Carlos will attend tomorrow with most of his immediate family. King Hussein is otherwise engaged, but is sending numerous children.

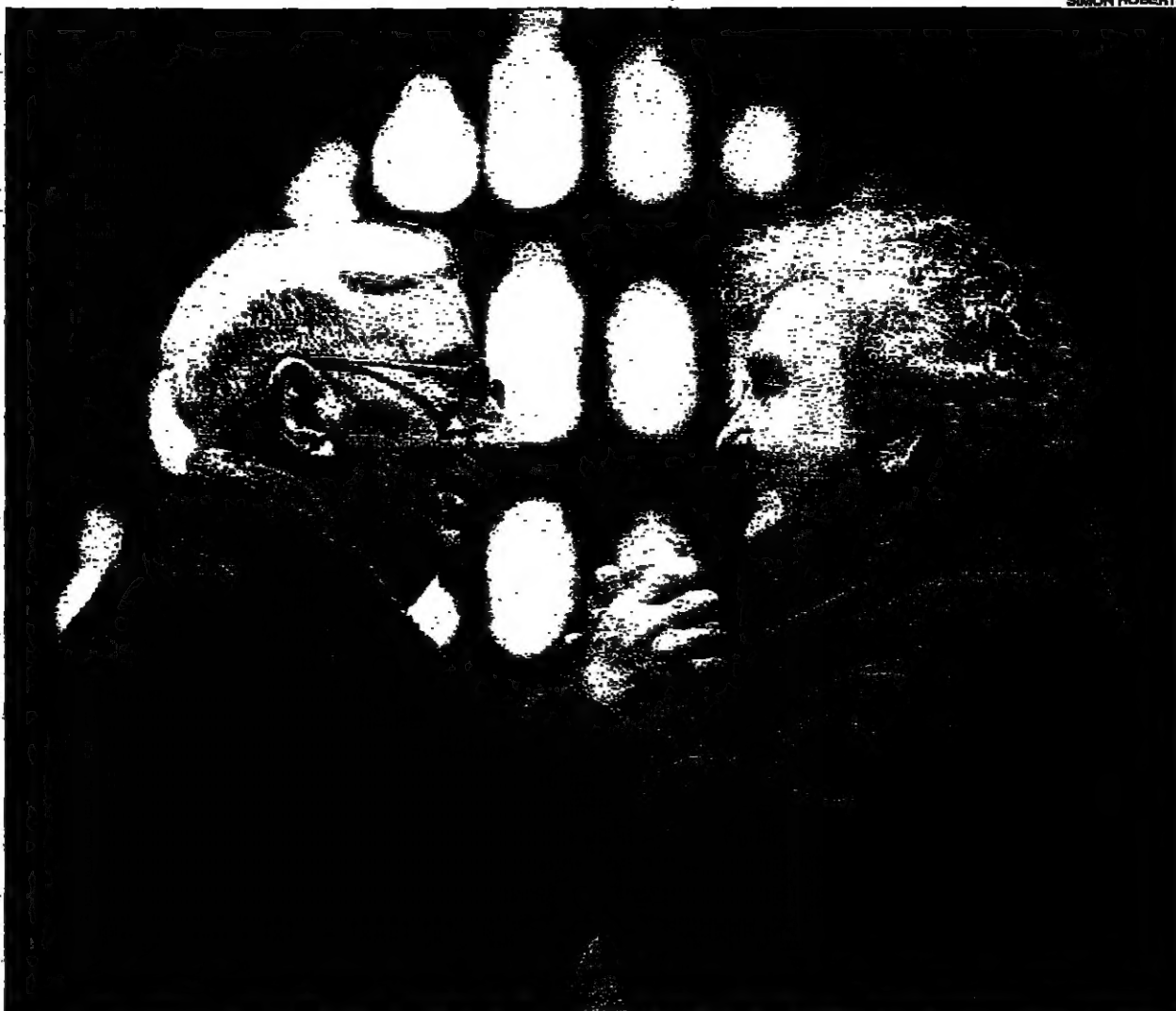
One monarch who regretted attending the 1947 wedding was King Michael of Romania. During his absence, Communists overthrew him, and on his return forced him to

leave at gunpoint. The king, with his wife and heir, are now based in Switzerland, and will be at tomorrow's service, as will King Simeon of Bulgaria and his immediate family. The Bulgarians were absent from the 1947 wedding, and have still not reclaimed their throne.

Given the Duke of Edinburgh's antecedents, neither wedding nor anniversary would be complete without the Greeks. They were there in force in 1947 and will be so again tomorrow, led by King Constantine, the last Greek monarch, who now lives in London.

One of the most hopeless thrones since the end of the Second World War has been that of Yugoslavia. That unhappy country's royal family were not at the 1947 wedding, despite having spent the war exiled in London. Crown Prince Alexander, current claimant to the throne of a nation which in reality no longer exists, and himself a long-time London resident, will be among the guests.

Others at the service will include most members of the British royal family, a large contingent of the Duke of Edinburgh's Greek and German relations, members of the Mountbatten family, staff of the Royal Household, and many of the Queen and Duke's personal friends.



One of the 850 couples at Manchester Cathedral yesterday. Music created for the Queen's wedding was played

Golden wedding couples renew vows at service

By Russell Jenkins

MORE than 850 couples who are celebrating their golden wedding anniversaries this year renewed their marriage vows at a special service at Manchester Cathedral yesterday.

The service, organised by the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, was timed to coincide with the week that the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh celebrate their own anniversary. All the couples attending took part in the ballot to attend the golden wedding garden party at Buckingham Palace in the summer.

Colonel John Timmins, the Lord Lieutenant, said: "Many of those who married in those austere days of 1947 could not have many trimmings which people associate with weddings today. They were usually very simple with little ceremony. We worked with the cathedral to make this service evoke memories and be as much like a wedding day as it can be."

Among the invited guests were Diane McNiece, 30, and

Mark Kain, 26, whose wedding day in the cathedral was disrupted by the IRA bomb in the city last summer. The couple, who were eventually married on June 14, renewed their vows yesterday. Mrs Kane said: "We had hoped to walk through the west door [last year] but it was certainly disappointing to have to change our plans. This is a lovely idea, getting together with golden wedding couples. It makes you realise others have suffered too."

The Lord Lieutenant and his ushers wore morning dress at the service. The music, created for the Queen's wedding, was played by the Band of the King's Division Normandy. Each of the couples received a piece of wedding cake and souvenir orders of service. There was also a message of good wishes recorded by the Queen.

Donald and Constance Ridgway, of Stockport, were among those recalling their wedding day. He said: "It is a dream come true for both of us to renew our vows here."

20 children arrested after rampage on bus

By Russell Jenkins

POLICE arrested 20 schoolchildren after they went on the rampage on a double-decker bus on their way home from school in Doncaster.

The youngsters, aged 11 to 12, screamed, shouted and spat as they ran riot through the bus, repeatedly opening the emergency door and rocking the vehicle from side to side.

Officers, called to the scene, took the children to Doncaster

police station, where they were released without charge. Police are talking to teachers about further action. Two of the pupils, from Hall Cross Lower School, in Doncaster, have been excluded and a further four or five face similar punishment.

After complaints from Mainline, the bus company, the local education authority has written to parents warning them that it is "simply not willing to tolerate such behaviour".

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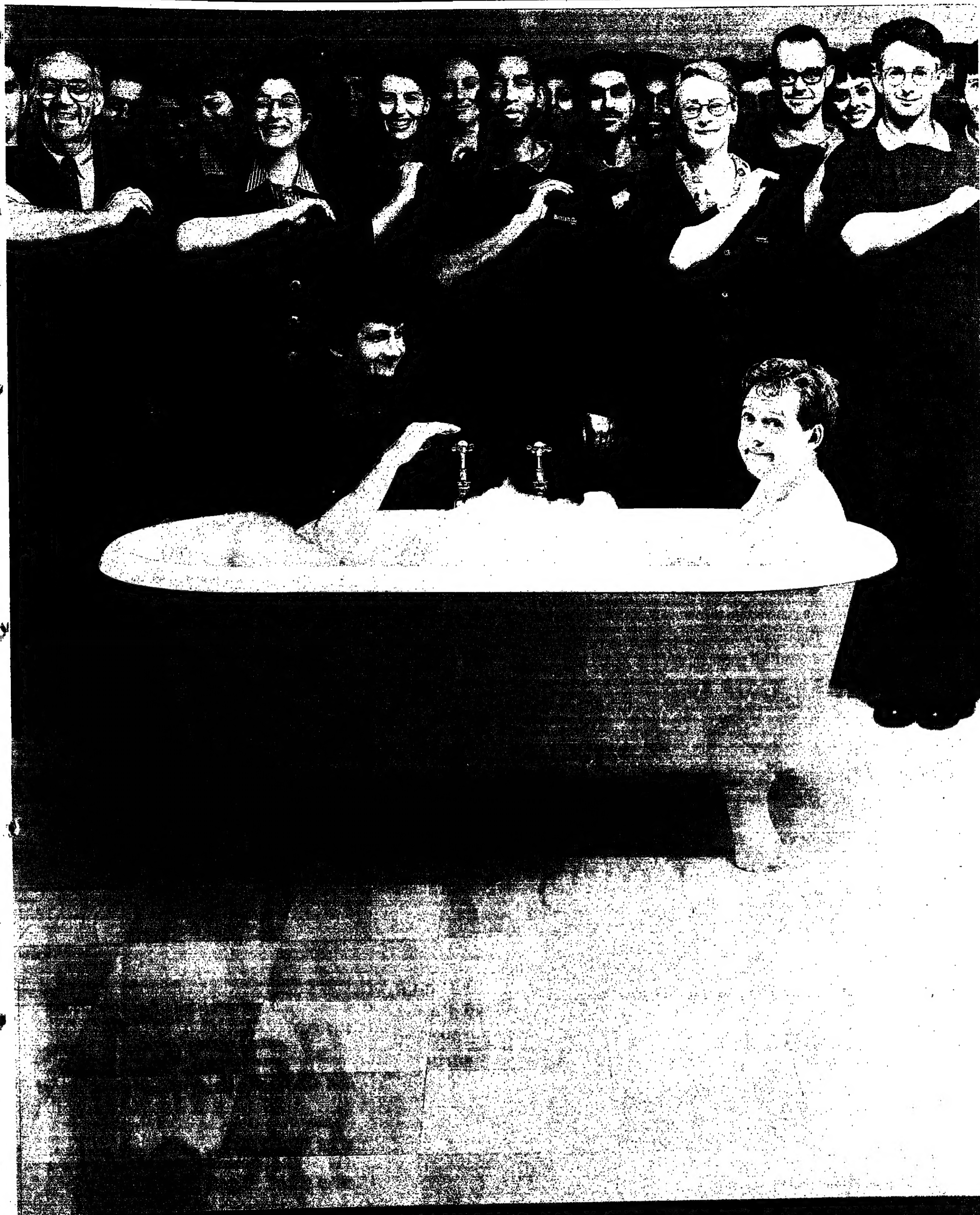
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Man seen fleeing from fields where Kate's body lay

By JOANNA BAILE

A MAN who appeared to be covered in blood was seen running from fields where the body of the murdered schoolgirl Kate Bushnell was found, detectives said yesterday.

He was spotted by a witness around the time that Kate's father discovered the 14-year-old's body with a deep cut to the throat. Mr Bushnell had gone out looking for his daughter, accompanied by a policeman, when she failed to return home after walking a neighbour's dog.

Detective Superintendent John Smith said: "We must find this man. If he is not the offender, then he is a vital witness. His sweatshirt was red-stained, which could have been blood."

The man, who had a moustache, was seen running from fields into the Kinnerton estate, a modern development near Kate's home in Erwick, on the outskirts of Exeter. He was described as in his early 30s, white, 5ft 10in or 5ft 11in, medium build, with short brown hair and wearing a blue sweatshirt, jeans and muddy trainers. He was seen around 7.40pm on Saturday.



Kate Bushnell: found 300 yards from home

Police also appealed for information on a second man who had been seen in the area. He was described as scruffy, 5ft 10in to 5ft 11in, late 30s to early 40s, straggly "salt and pepper" hair, thickset, with stubble and a brown checked overcoat.

Detectives disclosed that a London businessman, who wished not to be named, had offered a £20,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of the killer. Detective Superintendent Michael Stephens, who is leading the murder hunt, said:

"He has stated that the sole reason for putting forward the reward is because he is a concerned parent."

As the search for the murder weapon continued yesterday, firefighters drained a pond near the scene. Police also continued house-to-house inquiries in the area.

Alison and Stuart Smith, who own Gemma, the Jack Russell which Kate had been taking for a walk, spoke yesterday of their guilt that she had died while helping them when they were away on holiday. Mr Smith, a building site manager, said: "Initially, we felt shock and guilt that Kate was taking out our dog. We want to catch this man as soon as possible. If anybody knows of anything or has seen anything, they should contact the police."

Mrs Smith, a dinner lady, added: "Kate was a very intelligent and very responsible girl, who was much older than her years. She used to babysit for our three children and took care of our dog when we were away."

Mr Smith said Kate's parents, Suzanne and Jeremy, were coping well. He said: "I don't think the shock has set in yet. They are keen to speak out, but not at the moment."



Stuart and Alison Smith with Gemma yesterday. Mr Smith said: "We felt guilt that Kate was taking out our dog"

They are keen to speak out, but not at the moment."

Mrs Smith said she had never felt unsafe in the area and that the route Kate had taken was well-known to local people. She added that their

eldest daughter, Katy, 10, had broken down in tears when told of her friend's death.

"She has since been to see the Bushnells to give them her condolences," Mr Smith said of Kate. "She

had so much energy and loved children and dogs. She was very motherly to our children."

"We are spending a lot of time with Suzanne and Jeremy and we are trying just to be there for them as much as we can."

Margaret Bushnell, Kate's grandmother, from Norfolk, said: "We are devastated. I think you have already been told what a lovely girl she was."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Emergency cancer line inundated with calls

An emergency helpline set up after it was revealed that thousands of smear tests could have failed to detect signs of cancer has been inundated with calls from worried women, health chiefs said. More than 600 women called the helpline in 12 hours.

Warwickshire Health Authority is to rescure 18,000 slides after doubts were cast on the accuracy of the tests between January 1995 and April 1997, at a pathology laboratory at the Hospital of St Cross in Rugby. Results are expected in three months.

Fate sealed

A lifeboat became stuck on the seabed near Brighton beach after it was hit twice by 12ft waves while searching for a body reported floating in the water. One crewman was rescued by coastguard helicopter and two others reached the shore unaided. The "body" was a live seal.

Flower power

A rose named after Diana, Princess of Wales has proved so popular that buyers now face a two-year waiting list. The elegant white rose, unveiled at the Chelsea Flower Show last year, was named after the Princess to raise funds for the British Lung Foundation.

TV verdict delay

The High Court reserved judgment on whether Brentwood Borough Council in Essex exceeded its powers when closed-circuit television film of a man trying to kill himself with a knife was given to media organisations. It was shown on the BBC's *Crime Beat*.

Arresting line-up

Peter Kavanaugh, 21, a burglary suspect wanted for jumping bail, was re-arrested when he joined an identity parade at Bridewell police station in Bristol for the £10 paid-to-volunteers. He was recognised by a WPC.

Benny's last bow

Jack Benny's violin, part of the late comedian's act for more than 40 years, fetches £49,900 at Sotheby's London. Benny once accompanied the piano-playing President Truman and dined with Richard Nixon.

Tourist's curse

A stone taken as a souvenir from Conwy Castle in North Wales has been posted back from New Zealand by a terrified tourist called Conway. She believed it was cursed after she was hit by a run of bad luck.

Villagers in a flap over dovecote

ITS ORIGINAL residents have long since flown, but villagers living near Britain's largest surviving medieval dovecote are determined that no one else should move in.

Plans by the family that has owned the dovecote for 300 years to turn it into bed and breakfast accommodation have united the residents of a Cotswold village. They have formed a Save the Dovecote society, engaged the services of a London barrister who has a weekend cottage in the village, and intend to set up a charitable trust to buy it.

The 15th-century stone dovecote is 30ft high, has 1,175 nesting holes and is a landmark in the village of Naunton, near Stow-on-the-Wold. It is situated in watermeadows close to the River Windrush and featured in the 1992 BBC costume drama *Adam Bede*, starring Patsy Kensit and Sean Bean.

Naunton was the home of the former Tory Environment Secretary, the late Nicholas Ridley, who was accused of

Simon de Bruxelles on a proposal to turn a

15th-century nesting site into a B&B guesthouse

being a Nimby when he objected to plans to build new houses in the village. Martin Macklin, a local publican, submitted the plan to convert the Grade II listed dovecote for an elderly cousin, Geoffrey Hanks, the landowner behind the development opposed by Mr Ridley.

Mr Macklin wants to turn the run-down dovecote into a one-bedroom house and erect three separate accommodation units for family and bed-and-breakfast use on the same site.

But villagers have approached the National Trust and English Heritage with proposals for a joint venture to buy

and restore the dovecote. Dr Peter Morton, chairman of the Naunton Dovecote Conservation Group, said: "We have already held two meetings with nearly 70 villagers turning up at each. The local stonemason and other villagers have already offered their skills to help with restoration and a barrister with a weekend home here, Michael Crystal, QC, has offered his services."

Mr Macklin, landlord of the Black Horse Inn, said he wanted to conserve the building, which had been in his family for generations. He said: "The best way of saving it is to find a viable alternative use for it and that is precisely what turning it into a home would do. Outwardly the only change to its appearance would be glass in the windows."

Mr Hanks, in his 80s, says he is unlikely to sell to villagers, whether or not the application is approved. He said: "Most of them haven't been here more than 3½ minutes and now they are telling local families what to do."

Race council lawyer victimised colleague

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Commission for Racial Equality was found guilty yesterday of discriminating against an Asian employee because she had made a previous complaint against the organisation.

Chris Boothman, an Afro-Caribbean who is the CRE's legal director, acted out of personal animosity and manipulated an appointments panel to damage Raj Naidoo's attempt to become a principal officer, an industrial tribunal found. Mr Boothman tried to help an Afro-Caribbean employee by setting interview questions based on work that she had carried out during the previous two weeks.

The tribunal ruled that Mrs Naidoo had been suffered discrimination as a result of victimisation. But it said that her claim of racial discrimination was "not well founded". The tribunal dismissed Mr Boothman's evidence as "not credible" and found a series of failings at the CRE over the appointments procedure. Key documents were altered and the originals were missing, the

non-lawyer on the recruitment panel was influenced to change radically her marks for Mrs Naidoo and assessment sheets were not signed by all panel members.

The tribunal said that Mrs Naidoo, a South African-born Indian barrister, was unfairly treated by Mr Boothman, who had a strong reason to disavow her because she had made a previous complaint against him.

"His denial that he acted in

a discriminatory manner is contradicted by the facts as we have found them in respect of his credibility and his attempt to assist [the Afro-Caribbean employee]."

The tribunal at Croydon, South London, said: "We are convinced that this was a matter of personal animosity on the part of Mr Boothman, who manipulated the outcome of the deliberations of the panel to ensure that Mrs Naidoo was not appointed and was not even the next in line." Mr Boothman faces the prospect of disciplinary proceedings over selection procedures.

Mrs Naidoo, from Finchley, North London, had failed to become principal legal officer in 1994 and complained to an industrial tribunal that she had been racially discriminated against when the post went to a white woman. She withdrew the complaint and in 1995 applied for the post when it again became vacant.

A statement from the CRE said that it did not accept it acted unreasonably but took seriously the tribunal finding.



Naidoo: assessment marks were changed

100ft hole swallows garage and garden

By A STAFF REPORTER

A MAN who has lived in the same house since he was a child returned home from work to find half the garden he tends every day had disappeared down a 100ft hole.

Ken Derham, 54, said he could not believe his eyes when an old mineshaft opened up and swallowed half his garage, a coal shed and the garden path at the side of his end-of-terrace home in Fishponds, Bristol. The Victorian house had to be fenced off while the Coal Authority, which is footing the bill, worked through the night to repair damage estimated at £10,000.

Mr Derham, a factory worker, said yesterday: "I was shocked. I have lived here since I was seven but I never realised there was a mine-shaft. The ground at the side of the house just caved in. I didn't realise how deep or wide it was until they started to fill it in." Workmen poured in 300 tonnes of concrete and stone to plug the hole.

Mr Derham added: "It's lucky there was nobody at the side of the house. It went down right where we had a coal bunker at the end of the garden."

Ranji Patel, a neighbour, said: "One of our bedroom walls has a 6ft crack in it and we were not allowed to use that room while they filled in the hole. I was very worried, but they say it's safe now."

According to experts, the disused shaft is one of 300,000 scattered around the country and could be up to 300 years old.

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NEWS IN BRIEF
Emergency cancer line inundated with calls

After the launch of the new NHS cancer helpline, the number of calls to the 0800 404 0044 line has soared. The line was inundated with calls from patients and their families seeking advice and support. The NHS has said it is working to cope with the high volume of calls.

Fate sealed

The fate of the new NHS cancer helpline has been sealed. The line, which was launched in September, has been inundated with calls from patients and their families. The NHS has said it is working to cope with the high volume of calls.

Flower power

The NHS has launched a new campaign to encourage people to grow flowers. The campaign, called 'Flower Power', aims to improve the mental health of patients and their families. The NHS has said it is working to encourage people to grow flowers in their gardens.

TV verdict

The NHS has launched a new TV campaign to encourage people to get more exercise. The campaign, called 'TV Verdict', aims to improve the health of patients and their families. The NHS has said it is working to encourage people to get more exercise.

Arresting

The NHS has launched a new campaign to encourage people to get more exercise. The campaign, called 'Arresting', aims to improve the health of patients and their families. The NHS has said it is working to encourage people to get more exercise.

Butterfly

The NHS has launched a new campaign to encourage people to get more exercise. The campaign, called 'Butterfly', aims to improve the health of patients and their families. The NHS has said it is working to encourage people to get more exercise.

Tourist

The NHS has launched a new campaign to encourage people to get more exercise. The campaign, called 'Tourist', aims to improve the health of patients and their families. The NHS has said it is working to encourage people to get more exercise.

Hospital waiting lists are growing by 1,000 a week

HOSPITAL waiting lists in England are now growing by more than 1,000 patients a week, forcing the Government to water down its election promise to cut them quickly by 100,000.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, unable to prise any more money from the Treasury to tackle the problem, yesterday scraped together £5 million from savings on NHS red tape to set up new bureaucratic units to oversee greater efficiency by health authorities. The units include an "action team" to find and co-ordinate good practice, plus eight regional task forces who will oversee management. If the advice is not followed they will be able to send in a hit squad to sort out the problems.

At the best, Mr Dobson hopes that the new system will be able to hold the line on waiting lists this winter as well as ensure that, by March, nobody has to wait longer than 18 months for treatment. Labour was elected promising to cut the waiting list by 100,000, but figures released yesterday show that, between May and the end of September, it grew by more than 150,000 to 1,207,500 — the highest ever figure.

The number waiting more than one year increased by 11,000, or 24 per cent, to 57,700. Among those are 818 who have been waiting for more than 18 months — which the Patient's Charter states should be the absolute maximum time that anybody should have to spend without being treated.

In June of last year only nine people had been waiting more than 18 months, Mr

The Government is finding it hard to make good its election pledges, says Ian Murray

Dobson said it was unacceptable that anyone had to wait that long. Blaming the growth of the waiting list on Conservative policies, he said it would probably not be until towards the end of the present Parliament in 2002 that Labour would be able to honour its election promise.

"The growing waiting lists are like a superbug," he said. "It will take a long time to slow them down, longer to stop them and even longer to turn them round. But turn them round we will."

"We have provided an extra £300 million this year to help to restrain a growth in the list during the winter and from then on we will be setting

Two neighbouring authorities often carry out assessments of the same treatment, resulting in patients in one post code area receiving a new treatment which is denied to patients with an identical condition in another area.

Calling for a centralised body to act as a clearing house giving guidance on the cost effectiveness of new treatments, the public spending watchdog claims this would pay for itself in saving money from the NHS each year on rare treatments such as bone marrow transplants, neurosurgery and cochlear implants.

milestones to reduce the size of it gradually.

The man given the task of cutting waiting lists is Stephen Day, chairman of the new Waiting List Action Team, who as regional director in the West Midlands has succeeded in cutting the waiting list by 31,000 over two years.

Although more than half the 120 health authorities in England expect to enter the next financial year in debt, Mr Dobson made it clear that he did not expect to get any extra money to bail them out.

"The answer cannot just be loads of cash," he said. "There are huge differences between hospitals and regions serving similar populations. Organisation and good management to target resources must play their part."

Health authorities are wasting money and effort duplicating work on expensive state-of-the-art specialised services, according to a report by the Audit Commission published today.

The discovery of Le Blob, one of several galaxies found at an observatory in Hawaii using a sensitive microwave detector called Scuba, happened almost by default. A team of three British scientists was carrying out research with the James Clerk Maxwell radio telescope on top of the dormant Manna Kea volcano.



Dr Ian Smail of Durham University with one of the radio messages of distant stars taken with Edinburgh Royal Observatory's Scuba

By PAUL WILKINSON

BRITISH astronomers have given the name Le Blob to a newly discovered galaxy 10 million light years from Earth.

The unconventional title celebrates the involvement of two French scientists in the discovery, and the splash of light it made in the first pictures taken with special equipment devised by the Royal Observatory in Edinburgh.

The discovery of Le Blob, one of several galaxies found at an observatory in Hawaii using a sensitive microwave detector called Scuba, happened almost by default. A team of three British scientists was carrying out research with the James Clerk Maxwell radio telescope on top of the dormant Manna Kea volcano.

British scientists find galaxy called Le Blob

13,000ft above sea level, when their equipment failed. So they called it Scuba, the Submillimetre Common User Bolometer Array, which took 50 years to build at the Edinburgh Observatory and had not been used before.

The brightly burning stars of the galaxy were shrouded from view in clouds of galactic dust. The dust absorbs the starlight and it can be picked up only as microwaves. Scuba was able to detect the microwaves as they penetrated the interstellar dust

name. We have looked into a part of the spectrum that has never been viewed before. It has allowed us to see, in a certain amount of detail, galaxies in their infancy.

"It will allow scientists a new insight into the way the galaxies are formed and help in establishing the date of creation of the universe. One of the things we are interested in is the time it took for the galaxies to form, whether it was in a sudden violent episode or over a period of a few billion years."

In one small section of the night sky the team — which also included Andrew Blain, of the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge, and Rob Ivison, from the University of Edinburgh — were able to identify a cluster of galaxies, each one estimated at 13 billion years old.

Parents win right to claim CJD damages

By MICHAEL HORNBERY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

PARENTS of children who died from a fatal brain disease after being treated with growth hormone taken from human corpses won an appeal yesterday against being excluded from government compensation. The decision means that six families whose children developed Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) after being given the hormone to combat dwarfism will now be eligible to seek damages.

Between 1959 and 1985 some 2,000 children were enabled to attain normal stature through implants of growth hormone taken from the pituitary glands of almost a million corpses. A small number of these children — 26 to date — developed CJD. It has been established that they were inadvertently given growth hormone from the bodies of people who had died of CJD and were infected by this route.

The Court of Appeal overturned a High Court ruling that parents of affected children could claim compensation only if their hormone treatment began after July 1, 1977. Lord Justice Kennedy, sitting with Lord Justice Judge and Lord Justice Chadwick, said the six families barred from compensation should be entitled to seek damages because their children's treatment had "straddled" the cut-off date.

Fibre to cure bowel cancer

UP TO 10,000 cases a year of bowel cancer could be prevented if people ate enough fibre for breakfast, according to research published yesterday (Ian Murray writes).

Scientists have discovered that a natural substance called butyrate, derived from the fibre, can block the cancer-causing gene which grows tumours in the large bowel and kills 18,000 people a year.

Scientists at Bristol University have grown tumours in a laboratory while treating patients with products of fibre fermentation. They found that butyrate induced the tumours to self-destruct. "Interestingly, although able to induce colorectal tumour cells to commit suicide in the laboratory, butyrate is thought to be beneficial to the normal large bowel," said Chris Paraskeva, one of the researchers.

The Mr Tiger driving the train into the fire station Centre.



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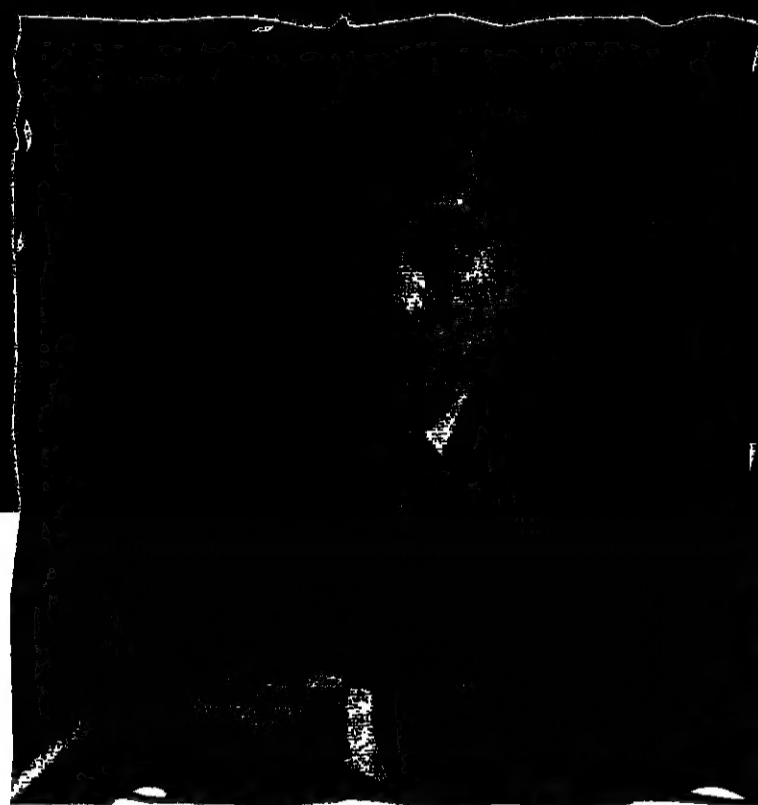


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Barbara Cassani
"Her Airline" Chief Executive



Robert Ayling
BA Chief Executive

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But the latest move by the 'world's favourite airline' reads like a photocopy of the easyJet business plan! Unfortunately there is no copyright on good ideas even if you have been led into believing that they were interested in buying a stake in easyJet. BA told us that they could not proceed because they would not get regulatory approval.

Why should they be allowed to proceed on their own without regulatory approval? They have now said the new subsidiary would be losing money until the third year, although they have refused to say how much. Therefore we have a dominant airline willing to lose unlimited sums of money competing with substantially smaller airlines that could be driven out of business in the process. It seems to us like a textbook case of abuse of dominant position under article 86 of the EC Treaty. We expect the European commission to investigate this new cheap trick by BA and stop it before it has achieved its desired effect. Look at their track record: Laker, British Caledonian, Danair, Virgin, who is next? They were all either bought or nearly or actually driven out of business.

Anyway, they are still looking for a name so since they seem to like the easyJet ideas we suggest that they should call " her airline " the AYLING EXPRESS in honour of the tough talking CEO of BA.

If you have a better idea of a name for the new "cheap trick" fax us on 01582 877 202, we'll forward all your thoughts to Bob Ayling!

We expect the European commission to investigate this new 'cheap trick' by BA and stop it before it has achieved its desired effect.



easyJet

Howard's t
line on cr
backed by p

Howard's tough line on crime backed by public

THE public strongly supported the tough crime policies initiated by the last Home Secretary at the same time as developing profound suspicions about the legal system, the latest *British Social Attitudes* report has found.

The 14th annual report, published today, found public sympathy for suspected criminals falling and support for greater police powers, and stiffer sentencing rising sharply. Most Britons also said they could imagine circumstances in which people should break the law to follow their consciences.

The independent research group Social and Community Planning Research polled a random sample of 3,500

REPORTS BY MARK HENDERSON

adults in England, Wales and Scotland for the survey in 1996. The conclusions suggest that the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, has little option other than to follow the tough line taken by his predecessor, Michael Howard, if he is to retain public support. More than 70 per cent of those polled believe people who break the law deserve stiffer sentences, and 86 per cent believe too many convicted criminals are let off lightly.

While more people still think it better to let a guilty man go free than to convict an innocent one, the gap is start-

ing to narrow considerably. More than 25 per cent would now prefer to see an innocent person in prison than a criminal let off.

More than 33 per cent believe police should be allowed to detain a man with no criminal record if they have a tip he plans to commit a crime, with 66 per cent supporting arrest if the man has a criminal record.

These tough attitudes towards criminals are tempered by a growing tolerance for "crimes of conscience" and a creeping mistrust of the police and the criminal justice system. Fifty-five per cent think there are occasions when a person should follow their conscience if it means breaking the law, while 41 per cent urge obedience in all circumstances. The figures reverse those ten years ago.

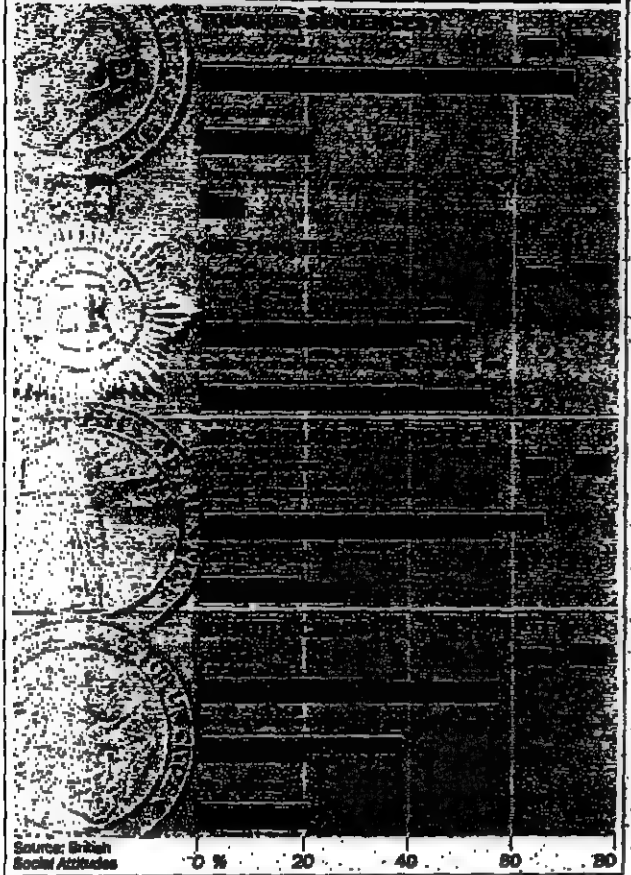
The police are still thought to be doing a good job by 82 per cent, though that is down from a 1982 high of 92 per cent. Those saying the police do a very good job are down from 42 to 24 per cent.

The authors of the report's crime findings, Roger Tardif of the University of Surrey and Lizanne Dowds of Queen's University, Belfast, said the results stemmed from recorded crime figures which rose from 2.5 million to 5.6 million between 1979 and 1993. Ambivalence about the legal system and draconian attitudes towards punishment indicated "a frustrated reaction against trends in crime".

The survey found that the "couch potato culture" of television addicts who know everything about soap operas and little or nothing about politics and current events is a myth. It noted that television actually enhances viewers' knowledge and understanding, contributing greatly to the political process.

British Social Attitudes: The End of Conservative Values? 14th Report (Ashgate Publishing: £25)

LOOKING AT LAW AND ORDER



Michael Howard's attitude towards criminals finds broad support in the survey

Thatcher voters were big spenders at heart

THE Thatcher revolution won plenty of votes, but did little to capture the hearts and minds of the public.

The *British Social Attitudes* report found people's views remarkably resilient through the 1980s, despite the then Prime Minister's wish for Britons to embrace her laissez faire philosophy. The electorate was never fully won over to Tory policies on the labour market and housing, and remained attached to high public spending on health and education through 18 years of Tory rule. Under 35s, the so-called "Thatcher's Children", are now the age group least likely to vote Conservative, the report says.

Compiled on 1996 fieldwork, it suggests that the Tories lost power on May 1 because they had not converted Thatcher voters to Thatcherism, and it also holds a warning for Tony Blair. Allison Park, one of the editors, said it made depressing reading for both main parties. "It really shows the extent to which 18 years of Conservatism failed to change public attitudes despite an unprecedented opportunity," she said. "The message to Labour is that it is not easy to change the way people think and believe."

Under the Tories, the public consistently gave importance to public services such as health and education: dissatisfaction with the health service doubled from 25 per cent in 1983 to half those polled in 1996, with little approval for Tory market reforms.

Several central parts of the Thatcher programme failed to find real favour among the electorate. Moves towards a flexible labour market were linked to rising job insecurity, and home ownership appeared a mixed blessing after the high interest rates and property slump of the early 1990s.

Only on crime did the Tories touch a nerve, with the headline prison-centred policy of Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary, reflecting public anxieties. But Mr Blair's approach, as Shadow Home Secretary, and that of his successor, Jack Straw — "tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime" — neutralised the electoral impact.

Trust confirmed as the central issue for voters

Voters are a great deal more level-headed than politicians usually give them credit for. Every year since 1983, Social and Community Planning Research has produced *British Social Attitudes*, a survey of changing social and political values based on more than 3,500 interviews.

The public is detached from the political debate. The "Thatcher's children" generation, which came of age from the late 1970s, is not only less inclined to identify with the Tories than any older generation, but has resisted most of the main political and economic messages of the Conservative era. They appear more materialistic than previous generations, placing more emphasis on pay than on other aspects of jobs. However, the authors conclude that their "findings hardly provide any ringing endorsement of the theory that the Thatcherite values of the Eighties had any profound influence on the generation which formed its political and social values during the period".

An alternative view is that growing up during the 1980s disenchanted this generation and made them more negative about the Tory approach as well as politically apathetic. The Eighties' generation turns out to be less tolerant of income inequality and more suspicious of the motives of big business. Just 21 per cent of those under 30 have "a lot of interest" in politics, compared with 37 per cent of those over 50. Many of these apparent differences may just reflect people's ages and, as the Eighties' generation grows older, its degree of interest in politics may become more like that of previous generations.

The most distinctive feature of Thatcher's children is their anti-establishment views on the monarchy, protests and freedom of expression. Younger people are much less likely than older generations to believe in the claims of the law

over individual conscience. More than two thirds of the under-30s believe there are occasions when conscience should hold sway, "even if this means breaking the law", compared with two fifths of those over 50. The authors suggest that these attitudes may change less as people age.

The survey confirms earlier findings about a decline in public confidence in democracy. Fewer than one in four people trust government to put the interests of the nation above party, although among members of the sample interviewed after the election, there was some recovery in public confidence. This may just be the immediate response of Labour supporters to their party's victory and may not last (indeed, it will have been tested recently).

The intriguing disclosure is that the decline in trust in government does not explain the fall in turnout on May 1 to the lowest level since the war. Turnout among those who trusted the Government least was virtually as high as among those who trusted it most. More important is an across-the-board decline in public expectations of what government can or should do. For instance, just 26 per cent think government should provide jobs for everyone who wants one, down from 36 per cent in 1985.

Nonetheless, the public believes there is scope for improvement and strongly supports constitutional change, particularly of the House of Lords, Scottish devolution and freedom of information.

The broad message is reassuring for the Government's step-by-step approach of deliberately lowering expectations. Voters are unimpressed by rhetoric but will respond to specific pledges being honoured. Tony Blair is right to want to protect his image of trustworthiness.

PETER RIDDELL

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Secret lenders don't want you to know

Of course you're pleased as punch to have got your mortgage organised. Now you can go ahead and buy the flat or house you want. Your mind is full of things like removals, getting the telephone and electricity laid on for when you arrive and remembering not to pack the kettle and tea bags at the bottom of a case.

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Channel 4 will
stir up storm
over Christmas

Lawyer 'lied for her detective lover'

A Crown solicitor weeps as an Old Bailey jury is told she admitted 'a moment of madness'. Tim Jones reports

A SOLICITOR for the Crown Prosecution Service told "lie upon lie" to protect her policeman lover from a drink-driving charge, an Old Bailey jury was told yesterday.

Penelope Schofield, 35, sobbed as she listened to a statement in which she allegedly told police: "In a moment of madness, when I agreed to say that I had driven, I have lost everything — my career, my job with the CPS, and it is likely that I will be struck off by the Law Society."

Miss Schofield accompanied Detective Constable Nigel Phillips to a dinner-dance that he had helped to organise for Bitterne CID at the De Vere Harbour Hotel in Southampton last December. Nicholas Campbell, for the prosecution, said Miss Campbell took exception when she saw DC Phillips dancing with a policewoman. After a quarrel she left in a taxi.

DC Phillips, he said, had

continued drinking and eventually drove his Rover four miles towards the home he shared with Miss Schofield. During the journey a tyre on his car was punctured and he drove into the car park of Bitterne police station.

Inside the station, the jury was told, his colleagues realised he was drunk. He telephoned Miss Schofield and, as he returned to the car, he was stopped, breathalysed and found to be almost three times over the legal alcohol limit.

He was arrested and taken to another police station, where he again telephoned Miss Schofield. Later that night, Mr Campbell said, Miss Schofield telephoned a police inspector to say that she had been driving when the puncture happened.

He said: "That was a lie, the first of many she was to tell over the course of the next two months." Another police inspector visited Miss Schofield



Miss Schofield yesterday: denies perverting justice

in the early hours and, while he gave her a breath test, which proved negative, he saw on her kitchen table a law book open at a page on drink-driving.

She told the inspector that she had been driving when she and her boyfriend got into

a serious argument, Mr Campbell said. Her alleged statement said: "I hit a kerb or something similar and stopped the car. I was distressed over the whole domestic situation. I left him with the car and took a taxi to my parents' home." Evidence had

emerged from the hotel charge that he had called a taxi for Miss Schofield after he had seen her arguing with DC Phillips.

The couple were arrested in February on suspicion of perverting the course of justice. Miss Schofield maintained she had been driving. Mr Campbell said: "She hoped to assist Nigel Phillips to secure a less severe sentence and perhaps save his career as a serving police officer." She claimed that she had ordered the taxi when she returned to the hotel to get her coat after leaving DC Phillips in the car.

Three days after her arrest, Mr Campbell said, she faxed another statement to the police in which she said DC Phillips had asked her to say she had been driving.

Her statement said: "Nigel was distressed and in tears because of the breathalyser reading. I was in tears and tired and confused, and in no

position to think about the matter rationally. When I said I had been driving, that was untrue."

"I wanted desperately to tell the truth but I was in a difficult position. I didn't want to let Nigel down. I knew I was in trouble for lying in the first place."

"I am ashamed of what I have done and for the shame I have brought to my family. I did what I did as a girlfriend and not in my professional capacity. I worked hard to obtain these qualifications. My life revolved around the legal profession."

Mr Campbell told the jury: "Phillips had put her in a very difficult position and you will have every sympathy for her. But by telling lies she has committed a criminal offence."

Miss Schofield, of Hambleton, Hampshire, denies trying to pervert the course of justice. The trial continues.

'Bullying' police officer jailed for assault

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A POLICE officer who repeatedly kicked a student he arrested during a street disorder was jailed for six months by a judge who branded him a bully and a coward at the Old Bailey yesterday.

Judge Graham Baul told PC Paul Evans, 32: "You brought disgrace upon yourself and shame on your profession."

Evans, based at Stoke Newington in northeast London, was convicted of assaulting Ben Swarbrick during disturbances that followed a rock concert in May 1994. Mr Swarbrick was kicked 20 times by the officer. Another six policemen accused of various offences, including assault and perverting the course of justice, were acquitted.

Judge Baul said that the jury's verdict in this case reflected a very different perception from that alleged by the Crown. The prosecution had claimed that police behaved with "appalling brutality" but the jury had convicted only one officer of a single assault charge and a fine.

During the eight-week trial, the jury could not be told that Evans had been charged by Scotland Yard with breaches of discipline over allegations that he assaulted a woman who had called the police for help in a domestic dispute. Civil rights lawyers said he had been the centre of complaints concerning abuse or assault.

During the trial Evans assured the jury he was a "tolerant, liberal-minded person" and said: "I have never offered gratuitous violence to anybody." However, in 1992 a magistrate at Highbury lambasted him for dragging a black woman driver along the ground by the scruff of her neck.

In July 1993, Evans arrested and allegedly assaulted a suspect in East London. Legal sources said Scotland Yard sent out of court. There are two other cases still outstanding that involve similar allegations.



Boy Scouts in 1908. In the Great War, their exuberance was better suited to outdoor work than clerical duties

Boy Scouts were too naughty for wartime MI5

BOY SCOUTS were employed as messengers by MI5 in the First World War, but the boys proved too mischievous and were asked to leave, previously classified files have disclosed.

Their role was detailed in a report by H. Branch of the Secret Service Bureau, the wartime forerunner of MI5, now released at the Public Record Office in Kew. H. Branch consisted of the secretariat and administrative section, including the Registry of Secret Files.

After Captain Vernon Kell, head of the bureau, turned to the Boy Scouts for volunteers, the first Scouts arrived on October 29, 1914. By September 4, 1915, their behaviour was thought to be unacceptable. The H. Branch report, compiled after the war, says: "Boys were found to be troublesome. The considerable periods of inactivity which fell to their share usually resulted in their getting into mischief."

When the Admiralty began to employ boys as "coast watchers", the Boy Scouts at MI5 were advised to take up this work, "outdoor work being much more fitted to

their energy". Arrangements were made to replace the Boy Scout messengers with Girl Guides, "and the results were most satisfactory". The H. Branch report says: "The girls proved more amenable and their methods of getting into mischief were on the whole less distressing to those who had to deal with them than were those of the boys."

Initially, 11 Girl Guides were employed, the number rose to 34 by August 1916. They were put on their honour not to read the papers they carried. The girls worked from 9am to 7pm and were given half a day off every week and every second Sunday.

Apart from the Guides, 650 women were employed at various times by the service in the registry and as secretaries. Many were "lookers up", res-

ponsible for checking on suspected aliens. There were "snags" when over-eager citizens let the authorities know of alleged German spies in their midst. The H. Branch report says: "In the early days of the war, when to the bawling mind any person who spoke with a foreign (and often even a Scots) accent was a 'German spy', much curious information arrived in MI5."

Mistakes were caused by the phonetic pronunciation of the suspects' names. One alarmed labourer informed MI5 "of the presence in his peaceful village of a spy boasting the astonishing name of Joe Kneecrutch". This suspect turned out to be a harmless Italian chef whose Christian name was Antonio, the MI5 file disclosed. One "looker up" was asked

to check the registry files to shed light on a message received which read: "Ayoub Druze now in Switzerland". The MI5 woman "naturally concluded that some Indian seditionist was meant and spent fruitless hours in endeavouring to trace him". She later discovered that the inquiry was for papers about fuses made in Switzerland.

In a report entitled "Woman's Work", it is disclosed that H. Branch made every effort to obtain "ladies of good education, and preferably those who had been to one of the large public schools or colleges". There was such a demand for more women to work in the registry that Cheltenham Ladies' College, Royal Holloway College and St Hugh's and Somerville, at Oxford, were asked to recommend former students.

As MI5 expanded, it moved premises, eventually to offices in the Haymarket. The women clerical staff proved so dedicated that they had to be "turned out almost nightly at midnight". When the bombs started to fall — the first Zeppelin attack was in the autumn of 1915 — the women refused to budge from their desks.

Life ban on mother guilty of terrorising ex-lover

By FRANCES GIBB

AN OBSESSED woman who burst into her ex-lover's home wielding two carving knives has been banned from contacting him again in the first case of its kind. Margaret Tucker is believed to be the first woman in Britain to be prosecuted under new harassment legislation introduced this year.

A court was told that Tucker, 48, a mother of two, bombarded Terry Murphy, a taxi driver, with up to four abusive letters a day after he ended their relationship. She persuaded her local housing association to move her from her home five miles away to one just two doors down from Mr Murphy. Finally, she broke into his flat wearing plastic gloves and carrying a carving knife in each hand.

Mr Murphy, 53, managed to flee after protecting himself with cushions. Tucker later told police: "I was going to kill him."

Passing sentence at Portsmouth Crown Court, the Recorder, Robert Harman, QC, banned Tucker, of Gosport, Hampshire, from seeing Mr Murphy for life. The order under the Protection from Harassment Act does not cover accidental meetings.

Tucker admitted pursuing a course of conduct which caused Mr Murphy to fear violence. The judge placed her on probation for two years. He warned her that, if she broke the restraining order, she could face jail.

After the hearing, Mr Murphy said he intended to move from his flat to get away from her. "After what she has put me through over the past 12 months, all I care about is that she leaves me alone."

Tucker had met Mr Murphy through using his taxi, and a sexual relationship had developed between them. He said he went out with her three or four times and she then became obsessive and wanted them to move in together. When he ended the relationship, she became very aggressive, went to his house and was abusive and threatening.

Channel 4 will stir up storm over Christmas

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

CHANNEL 4 is to rescreen some of its most controversial scenes in a programme to celebrate its 15th anniversary. The lesbian kiss in the soap *Brookside* and an *Equinox* documentary on depraved sexual practices will be revived for the Christmas schedule.

Michael Jackson, the new chief executive of Channel 4, also said the whole of Chris Morris's much criticised *Brass Eye* series would be repeated in the new year. Morris "set up" MPs and celebrities to appear in a spoof current affairs programme. Channel 4's former chief executive, Michael Grade, vowed never to work with Morris again after an obscene insult about him appeared in a subliminal message in the final programme of the series.

The *Storm Over 4* programme will include a programme about necrophilia, other *Brookside* storylines

such as the incestuous relationship between a brother and sister, and sex theme nights from *The Red Light Zone*. Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* and Derek Jarman's *Jubilee*, both premiered on Channel 4, will also be shown again.

A Channel 4 spokesman said: "Often a storm over headline came about when a reporter got overexcited about a programme he had not seen, phoned an MP who had definitely not seen it, and then wrote a story which usually began 'MI5 tonight called for a ban on the Channel 4 programme which...' Mary Whitehouse and other critics of the channel will be quoted in the documentary."

Mr Jackson has continued Channel 4's tradition of generating controversy by backing the screening of Ken Loach's film *Ladybird*, which was censored by the Broadcasting Standards Com-



Jackson: wanted to mark channel's anniversary

mission earlier this year. He denied that there had been a ban on Morris. "We hope to work with Chris Morris again," he said. "I think that was a personal reaction from Michael [Grade]."

Mr Jackson, who is known to have scrapped the late-night *Grillie Show* when he arrived at Channel 4, was asked if he thought it was the worst programme the channel had ever shown. He said: "I plead the fifth amendment on that one."

Viewers will have a chance to pick controversial programmes when they vote, by post, phone or on the Internet, for their favourite Channel 4 programmes for Saturday December 21.

Television, page 51

Ministers confident over legal aid reform

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS are to publish details in the New Year of plans for scrapping civil legal aid and expanding "no win, no fee" work to most civil cases, including libel.

For the first time, officials have confirmed that defamation actions may be included in the "no win, no fee" arrangements. At present there is no legal aid for defamation cases. "No reasons have yet been put forward as to why defamation actions should not be included," one official said yesterday.

Ministers have taken counsel's opinion and are confident of surviving any challenge in the courts to the reforms that amount to a dismantling of the civil legal aid scheme. They argue that they do not need primary legislation for the reforms, which are planned to take effect in the spring.

Underpinned by mounting opposition from the legal profession and the consumer lobby, they plan to issue a consultation paper in January or February that will carry

first details of the plans. They are also commissioning a business plan from management consultants on the impact of the measures on law firms.

The consultation paper is expected to retain legal aid, or some kind of hardship fund, for certain areas of work, such as civil actions by landlords to evict tenants; and possibly for most people who now qualify for legal aid when they are forced to defend a legal action.

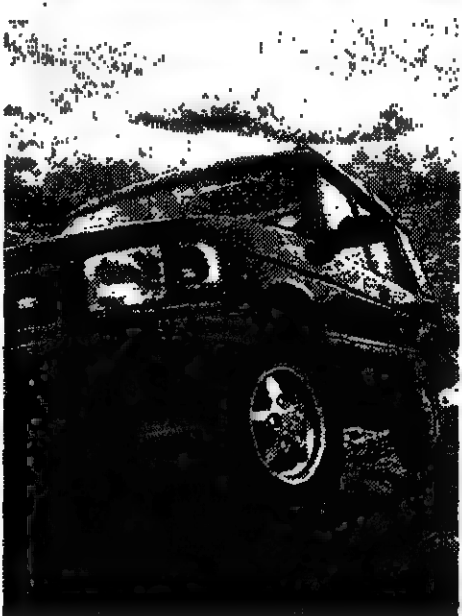
On Friday the Government will deliver a strong message in a debate in the Commons that lawyers' opposition to the reforms stems from their fear of losing a form of subsidy, provided through legal aid by the taxpayer. A senior official said: "I don't think any professional would be comfortable with having a subsidy taken away from it." Solicitors had been able to run cases "win or lose", he said. "Who would not fight for that? But that amounted to a subsidy and was 'extremely unattractive'."

Ministers and officials reject claims by the Law Society, the Bar and consumer groups that the changes will hit the poor and that the insurance market is not ready to provide affordable premiums that people will need to protect themselves against paying a winning opponent's costs. Officials are in talks with several insurance companies and say the market is alive to the prospects of their role under "no win, no fee" work.

They insist that unless the Government shows that it is determined, the insurance market will not come forward to step into the gap. "Nothing less than radical change and being resolute and firm will ensure this happens," one said. "Ministers can't sit down and redesign the market, they can make the changes which anticipate the policy and will lead to that."

Ministers will make it clear that until they can control the legal aid budget, they cannot free funds for a community legal service or for areas such as industrial tribunals.

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Compulsory fund could finance care in old age

By Jill Sherman and Anne Ashtworth

FRANK FIELD disclosed yesterday that the Government is considering introducing a compulsory insurance scheme to finance long-term care for the elderly.

The Welfare Minister, speaking in Berlin, suggested that people should have to pay regular contributions to insure themselves against the cost of care in their old age.

Mr Field, who is preparing a separate Green Paper on welfare reforms for the new year, said that he was particularly interested in the German system of compulsory insurance, which covers a range of care, at home and later in nursing accommodation.

This month the Government will announce the terms of reference and the chairman of its royal commission on long-term care, which is expected to report within a year. The commission was set up after growing concern about the number of people having

to sell their homes to pay for nursing accommodation.

Mr Field emphasised that the German scheme could not necessarily be adopted in Britain but he urged members of the royal commission to examine this model. Under the German system, people have to pay 1.5 per cent of their salary into the insurance fund.

Half of this is met by the employer and half by the employee. Those earning more than £2,000 a month can choose to opt out, but they would then have to pay for their care privately.

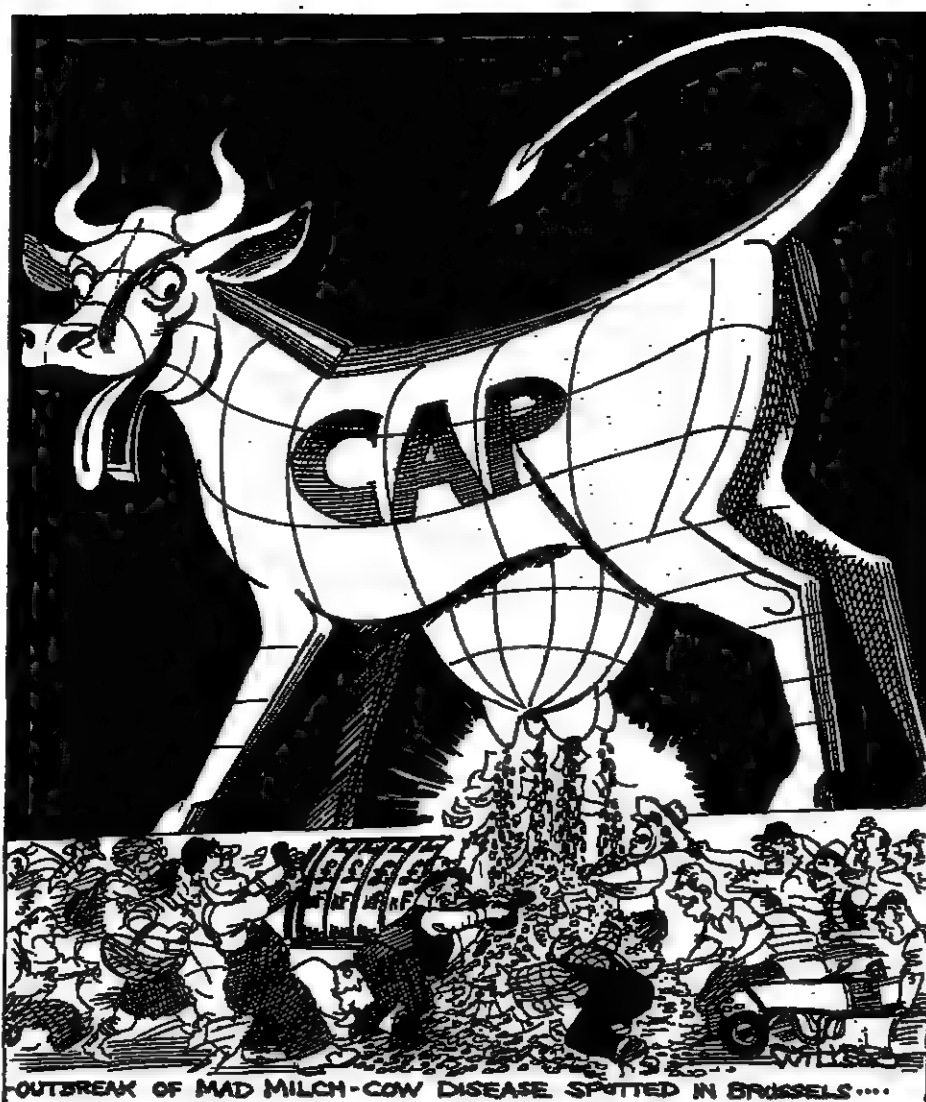
Contributors pay into 1,300 different health insurance funds. Once they apply for cover, the fund assesses them and places them into one of three categories of need.

Those only needing minimum care would be able to opt for cash payment or services, such as home help. Those in higher categories would be given nursing accommoda-

tion. Mr Field told the Centre for British studies that the scheme, which started in 1990, had been much more successful in Germany than predicted. Funds were in surplus, despite a high take-up and this would cushion future increases in demand, he argued.

"Such a scheme has obvious attractions. Like medical insurance, coverage would be almost universal. As a pay-as-you-go scheme, it could be introduced without too much delay. More importantly perhaps, the scheme created a link between insurance and benefits and removed the stigma of residential care being tied to social assistance."

Mr Field said he hoped that his forthcoming Green Paper would be a turning point in the restructuring of the £100 billion social security budget. However, he signalled that the paper would set out reforms that could take several Parliaments to achieve.



Farmers given billions in EU 'compensation'

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

THE European Union paid farmers several billion pounds in unjustified compensation for crops and animals, including payment for some cattle slaughtered in Britain's anti-BSE programme, the EU's financial watchdog reported yesterday.

The Court of Auditors singled out the common agricultural policy (CAP), which consumes almost half the EU's £53 billion annual expenditure, as a main source of fraud and waste in its annual review of the union's administration. Reporting to the European Parliament, Bernhard Friedrichmann, the president of the Luxembourg court, said lax management and swindling in EU spending cost up to an estimated £2.8 billion, or 5.4 per cent of payments from nationally and centrally administered funds.

The auditors noted a slight drop in mishandled funds, which totalled 5.7 per cent of spending last year, and they offered mild praise to Jacques Santer, the Commission president, for his efforts to tighten controls. However, for the third year the auditors said the irregularities meant they could not approve the spending accounts.

Cereal farmers were the biggest beneficiaries of anomalies in the CAP. In 1995 and 1996, they were awarded some £2 billion, based on acreage, to "compensate" them for crops that were sold at market rates far higher than the EU's guaranteed price. "The basic compensatory amounts for cereals is out of touch with world market prices," the auditors said.

Beef and veal producers received over half a billion pounds in unnecessary payments, they said. In a survey of the biggest farms, one British enterprise was found

to have benefited from £176 million of subsidy, second only to a German one that received £223 million. The Commission defended itself yesterday, saying that it had long sought to reduce the subsidies to reflect market prices, but had been overruled by national farm ministers.

The costly emergency measures to compensate beef producers after the mad cow crisis had been subject to confusion and exploitation, the report showed. Under the scheme to slaughter cattle over 30 months old, British farmers were supposed to receive EU compensation at a rate of £262 per animal incinerated. The Commission agreed to pay 80 per cent of a claim for 429,000 animals but overloaded facilities meant that only a fraction had been incinerated by the end of the year. Under another scheme for the slaughter of younger animals, Britain had also been wrongly compensated for 1,695 cattle that were over 30 months old.

In an investigation of abuses in personal compensation, the auditors reported evidence of fraud by members of two Brussels-based "superquangos", the Economic and Social Committee (ESC) and the Committee of the Regions. A spot check on travel expenses at the ESC, an advisory body with 22 members, showed that 60 per cent of claims for air and train tickets in a two-month period were irregular. In a technique that is also alleged to be rife in the European Parliament, members would charge for expensive tickets then obtain refunds. The auditors' findings produced an outcry when they were first reported in September. The committee has now introduced more stringent rules.

How unsafe meat was subsidised

By MICHAEL HORNSEY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH farmers have been paid EU subsidies to market cattle above the age considered safe for human consumption under rules to protect the public against BSE, according to the Court of Auditors.

This was possible, the court says, because the Government allows veterinary inspectors to assess age by checking an animal's teeth. The 1,695 illegal cattle, for which there was documentary proof that they were over 30 months old, were sold under a "beef marketing

payment scheme" for which Britain was allocated £25 million by the EU. Cattle above this age are regarded as being at greater risk of BSE.

The audit report also questions another scheme that pays abattoirs between £80 and £100 per animal to slaughter and destroy newborn calves for which there is no longer any market because of the EU ban on British beef. It says a visit to one British abattoir found no adequate controls to ensure that carcasses were destroyed after slaughter.

TUITION FEES

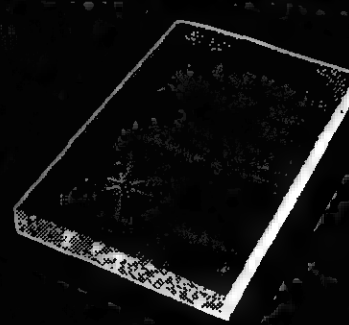
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What a giggle

Widdecombe committee Hamilton a

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What a giggle as peers turn to the business of Mimi and Fifi

IN THE Lords yesterday attention turned to the rude cards by which prostitutes advertise in London phone boxes. Their Lordships proved quite knowledgeable on the subject. The Baroness Trumpington heaved so massively with laughter as to arouse fears for the structure of this 19th-century building. But the question had to await the investiture of new life peers, accompanied by the usual procession of be-ribboned flunkies dressed in carpets and people wearing Cornish pasties on their

heads, prancing around according to what we call "tradition" in this gift, paste and plasterboard apology for a senate. The fake antiquity dates from 1953, when life perts were invented.

I looked down at their assembled Lordships. I have never — no, not even in a provincial American television studio — seen so much hair dye. Black Rod, who may not be wearing a koupes, strutted about in a frock coat and black leather gloves like a ponceified cat-burglar.


Lingering doubts fled as I

definitely not cool in 1997 to be a Lord.


We moved to tart: Not that the Earl of Bradford, whose Question on "unauthorised advertising in London phone boxes" trod delicately, mentioned these women.

For the Government, Lord Haskel, who looks like a high-class haberdasher, did. Advertising cars placed by prostitutes, he said (cries of "aah") were "detracting people from using phone boxes" (cries of "oh"). BT was bawling calls to these numbers.

What did Lord Dunsany

 **MATTHEW**
POLITICS

then affect such gratitude that someone else had dared say "prostitute"? This is not, after all, a shy peer. Who's *Who* suggests that his Lordship, who has a beard and lives in Weston-under-Lizard, has published a book called *My Private Parts and the Stuffed Parrot*. Even the steamiest of the cards that

W PARRIS 
AL SKETCH

about yesterday draw the line at that sort of thing.

The minister went on to explain that legal action to ban these cards had been blocked by lawyers acting for the London Collective of Call Girls. At this point Lady Trumpington began shaking in a helpless fit of giggles. We imagined the card which this

(heaven forbid) place in a BT kiosk . . .

"Substantial Lady offers discipline for the mature gentleman. 'Naughty boys must pull their socks up.' Phone Trumppers on Westminster too-too-too - OHIOHIOH!"

Lord Annan rose. "In recent years," he said, a "disastrous" legal judgment had deemed the *Ladies' Directory* (a discreet catalogue of prostitute services) a "conspiracy against public morals". But surely there had to be ways

Indeed. One merely notes that this case (Shaw vs the DPP) was decided in 1961. Only in the Lords is 36 years ago "recent".

Lord Campbell of Alloway wondered "what on earth was the use" of blocking telephones "when the girls can get another — perhaps using the name Mimi instead of Fifi". This revealed as much about Lord Campbell's interior life as about telecommunications.

Lord Palmer — to cries of Oh! — thought the call-cards

trade. This Lord Palmer is the Palmer of Huntley & Palmers' biscuits. He may not know that, according to a new book about the work of the Wolfenden Committee (which in the 1950s examined the law on homosexuality and prostitution) members shrank in their private deliberations from using the h- or p- words. They bantered instead about "huntleys" and "palmers". Lord Palmer may not care to be linked with palmers — but at least nobody has ever called him a

Widdecombe quits committee over Hamilton affair

BY ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Tory MP Ann Widdecombe resigned from the Standards and Privileges Committee yesterday in protest at its handling of the Neil Hamilton affair.

The former Prisons Minister said that the committee's failure to agree whether Mr Hamilton had taken "cash for questions" while he was Tory MP for Tatton was a denial of natural justice and its procedures were a sham. She added that Parliament's system of self-regulation was "terminal ill".

Miss Widdicombe, the MP for Maidstone and the Weald, stood down after being denied a chance to speak in Monday night's Commons debate on the committee's report. She said that Robert Sheldon, the committee's chairman, had grossly misrepresented her position when he spoke in the debate.

Quentin Davies, the Tory MP for Grantham and Stamford, who was the only other dissenting voice on the committee, was also not called by the Speaker.

In her resignation letter, which she handed to Mr. Sheldon in person, Miss Widdcombe said: "I believe relations and trust to have broken down to such an extent that I would not be able to

serve the committee in the spirit of unity which is essential to preserving its reputation.

"An even more considerable reason for my resignation is that I believe self-regulation is now terminally ill and I have little faith in the ability of this committee to resuscitate it.

"I genuinely regarded it as an honour to be appointed to the committee which I expected to be a senior and serious body. I now regard the shambles which has characterised the handling of this report to be deeply shameful to the committee and something which I no longer wish to be associated."

Miss Widdcombe and Mr Davies both disowned the conclusion of Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner, that there was "compelling" evidence that Mr Hamilton had taken envelopes of cash from Mohamed Al Fayed.

Neither of the two Tory MPs was able to say whether they thought Mr Hamilton had taken cash for questions. They had no means of knowing because they were refused


permission to reopen the case by cross-examining Mr Hamilton. Mr Al Fayed, or the employees he claimed filed the envelopes with £50 notes.

Sir Gordon had told the committee that his position would have been made difficult if they reopened the inquiry.

The independent MP Martin Bell, who despite having ousted Mr Hamilton from his Tatten seat has agreed to take up the cudgels on his behalf, said that Mr Al Fayed should have been called before the committee.

"If the chief accused was going to give evidence, then surely should the chief accuser, Mr Mohamed Al Fayed, and they should both have been cross-examined." If procedures could not be put in order, then some body outside Parliament would have to examine such cases, he told BBC Radio 4's *World at*

Mr Sheldon told the same radio programme that the committee would be examining its procedures, and added: "Of course there is room for improvement, there always is." He said it had been right not to reopen the inquiry because Mr Hamilton had failed to bring forward any new evidence.



John Major during a campaign

Major

By NICHOLAS WATT AND PETER HAIN

JOHN MAJOR received a warm reception yesterday when he began the campaign trail to support his Conservative Party *candidate* in tomorrow's by-

Months after being turned out of Downing Street, a beaming Blair was thronged by enthusiastic fans and young supporters. "Welcome back!" one white-haired woman shouted out to the former Prime Minister as he braved the rain. "Welcome back," Beckenham said. Blair grinned at him and added: "You were too nice. That was the problem."



campaign visit to Beckenham.

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Major said that he had come to the conclusion that the by-election was "damaging" to the Liberal Democrats. He said that he had come to the conclusion that the by-election was "damaging" to the Liberal Democrats. He said that he had come to the conclusion that the by-election was "damaging" to the Liberal Democrats.

During an early-morning radio interview, the Home Secretary failed three times to declare his support for motor racing's exemption from sponsorship ban. For days he had been silent on the issue and it has been an open secret in Whitehall that the Home Department was far less keen on the exemption than Downing Street.

The Tories said that he avoided the question, giving the impression that the policy had been imposed on him.

But within two hours Dobson was back in London. When asked at a press conference on NHS waiting lists whether he supported Formula One policy, he said: "Of course I do. I played a part in deciding what the po-

Health and Downing Street officials denied that Mr Dobson had been forced into or that he had breached Cabinet collective responsibility. It is understood after the interview with MacGregor on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme had ended Mr Dobson knew that he would have to act.

Dobson makes his position clear

BY PHILIP WEBSTER

FRANK DOBSON acted swiftly to prevent further embarrassment for the Government over tobacco advertising yesterday after repeatedly refusing to back the special treatment awarded to Formula One.

During an early-morning radio interview, the Health Secretary failed three times to declare his support for motor racing's exemption from the sponsorship ban. For days he had been silent on the issue and it has been an open secret in Whitehall that the Health Department was far less keen on the exemption than the Treasury.

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John Major during a campaign visit to Beckenham One woman told him that his problem was being "too nice"

Major is swamped by affection

BY NICHOLAS WATT AND POLLY NEWTON

JOHN MAJOR received a rapturous reception yesterday when he returned to the campaign trail to support the Tory candidates in tomorrow's by-elections in

Months after being turfed out of Downing Street, a beaming Mr Major was thronged by enthusiastic pensioners and young supporters. "When are you coming back?" one white-haired pensioner shouted out to the former Prime Minister as he braved the rain in Beckenham. He grinned at his fan as she added: "You were too nice. That was your problem."

in the early 1970s. I took nearly an hour to walk 100 yards along High Street as hundreds of supporters turned out in the solid Tory sea. Scores of shoppers asked him to autograph cards, shop assistants poured out to greet him and office workers waved from upstairs windows.

Throughout his walkabout Mr Major sang the praises of Jacqui Laik, the Tory candidate, who won the chance of resuming her parliamentary career when Piers Merchant resigned his seat last month after admitting an extra-marital affair. Mr Merchant held Berham with a majority of nearly 5,000 on May 1 despite a 15 per cent swing to Labour.

Mr Major relished his return to the street, but memories of his devastating

defeat on May 1 were still raw. As campaigned later in the day in Winchester he admitted that the Tories had lost the general election partly because they were seen as "harsh and uncaring." He did not believe that the party was guilty of those faults, but added: "The perception was there and of course the perception was damaging."

Mr Major said that he had come to Winchester to support his "very close friend," Gerry Mace, who lost his seat on May 1 to the Liberal Democrat, who won the by-election. He called after the High Court ruled that Major Oaten, the Liberal Democrat, should not have been declared the winner because he had voted irregularly.

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Primakov reports progress on Iraq impasse

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW AND
MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

YEVGENI PRIMAKOV, the Russian Foreign Minister, announced last night that he had reached a breakthrough in talks with a senior Iraqi official on resolving the confrontation between Baghdad and the United Nations, providing for a diplomatic solution to the crisis without the need to resort to force.

Mr Primakov was speaking after talks in Moscow with Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, who arrived unannounced yesterday morning. His trip to Moscow came after a weekend pledge by President Yeltsin to intervene to end the crisis.

Mr Primakov said that the plan was based on proposals

sent by Mr Yeltsin to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq "some days ago". Mr Aziz, who also had talks yesterday with Mr Yeltsin, had brought Saddam's reply. Mr Primakov said that Mr Yeltsin's letter had offered a detailed plan to break the present deadlock, but he did not give details.

"The programme provides for avoiding armed conflict and resolving the crisis by Iraq's implementation of the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council," Mr Primakov said. He did not say what was being offered to Iraq in exchange.

In reference to an earlier indication by America of a willingness to negotiate an end to



RAF Tornado fighters land at the Incirlik joint Turkish-United States airbase in southern Turkey yesterday after a mission to monitor the no-fly zone in northern Iraq

the crisis, Iraq claimed yesterday that it had scored a "resounding political and diplomatic triumph". The state-run newspaper *al-Jumhuriya* credited Saddam, a "thinker and strategist", with inflicting a "crushing defeat on America and Britain".

The front-page editorial stated: "If America attacks Iraq, it will face severe condemnation from various countries. If it retreats and brokers an agreement through the United Nations or directly

It will now be very difficult for the US to go back to the status quo

with Iraq, this means victory of peace and dialogue." Diplomats agreed that Saddam had forced his enemies into their first concession since the Gulf War, but said talk of an Iraqi victory could well be premature given the continuing American military build-up in the Gulf. "The fact

that [Britain and the US] declared publicly they are willing to modify the sanctions regime is very significant. Saddam has broken the dam," a diplomat representing a moderate Arab country said. "It will now be very difficult for the United States to go back to the status quo that

existed before October 29 [when Iraq announced it would expel US weapons inspectors]." He added: "There will now have to be some very delicate diplomatic footwork whereby Saddam can be rewarded but without letting the Americans lose face."

A State Department official in Washington said that he was aware of Mr Primakov's announcement, but declined to comment without seeing the plan in full.

Moscow has maintained good relations with Iraq since Soviet times and has long called for the lifting of international sanctions imposed on Baghdad after its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. If any breakthrough were achieved as a result of Russia's intervention, it would greatly increase Moscow's standing in the Middle East, where Russia has been largely sidelined since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Last weekend Mr Yeltsin spoke to President Clinton on the telephone and agreed to use Moscow's special relationship with Iraq to resolve the confrontation. Russia has already said that Iraq must allow the inspectors back, but is adamantly opposed to proposals by the United States and Britain to use force.

Mr Primakov emphasised yesterday the importance of allowing the UN Special Commission on dismantling weapons of mass destruction to continue its work in Iraq.



Berger announces plans in Washington yesterday to send aircraft reinforcements to the Gulf region

US sends more planes in case diplomacy fails

FROM TOM RHODES
IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA yesterday announced plans to bolster its air power in the Gulf because of the uncertain stalemate with Iraq over United Nations weapons inspections.

After a meeting between President Clinton and his top foreign policy aides Samuel Berger, the National Security Adviser, announced United States plans to reinforce more than 200 warplanes that are already in the region.

The decision, thought to include the deployment of B52 cruise missile-

carrying bombers and F117A Stealth bombers, came shortly after an American pilot completed the second uninterrupted flight by a U2 surveillance aircraft since President Saddam Hussein threatened to shoot down UN spy planes flying over Iraq.

The United States had warned Iraq of serious consequences, hinting at severe military retaliation, if it fired on the U2.

The Pentagon was expected to announce the number of new warplanes involved last night and state whether they would, as in the past, be stationed at Diego Garcia, a

British dependent territory in the Indian Ocean. Mr Berger said that the five permanent members of the UN Security Council — America, Britain, Russia, France and China — were trying to arrange a meeting in Europe to discuss the crisis. But it is unlikely to take place today.

Washington viewed the meeting as an opportunity to hear full details of the Russian plan to resolve the crisis and to seek complete solidarity from Russia and France on the need for Baghdad to allow the weapons inspectors back into Iraq with no caveats from Saddam.

British and American officials

maintained yesterday that diplomacy remained the best route to achieve positive results with Saddam but said they were pursuing a double-pronged strategy of increasing military pressure on Iraq while negotiations continued.

Still unable to mount a credible coalition for any military action against Iraq, diplomats from London and Washington are working hard to maintain support from the Arab states in the event that, despite apparent successes yesterday, such a course should become necessary.

Mr Berger said the Administra-

tion was interested in improving the existing UN arrangement that allows Iraq to sell limited amounts of oil providing the revenue is used to buy food and medicine.

But he firmly denied that it would be used as an inducement for Iraq to allow the inspectors back — a view that Baghdad had claimed as a sign of victory over the West.

"Once this crisis is resolved, if it is resolved satisfactorily, and Saddam comes into compliance, we would be in favour of having more oil available, under UN supervision, for food, to avoid any suffering to the Iraqi people," Mr Berger said.

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Robber leaves southern Africa in the dark

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

A POWER failure that plunged Zimbabwe and Zambia into darkness for nearly 12 hours last week and reverberated throughout southern Africa at a cost of millions of pounds was started by a Zambian helicopter that crashed into a steel girder he intended to saw into brackets.

The girder was a main strut on a 90ft tower south of the Kafue Gorge power station in southern Zambia, holding up part of the 330 KV powerline that connects Zambia with the Southern African electricity grid, which links six countries.

At 3pm on Friday, the chief removed the girder. The tower collapsed, bringing with it two adjacent pylons, and broke the circuit. Sam Mahlanza, spokesman for the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, said:

"It started a series of massive oscillations across the region. The sudden vacuum in the system caused the 960 MW Hwange thermal power station 200 miles away in northwest Zimbabwe to trip. It was followed by the 1,100 MW turbines on Kariba Dam cutting out. Current flowing into Zambia from the Inga hydroelectric power station in Congo reversed and went surging back along the line.

South Africa lost its connection with the 2,000 MW Cahora Bassa hydroelectric scheme in Mozambique. The lines between South Africa and Zimbabwe went dead. As source after source of power switched off, so did Zimbabwe and Zambia. Supplies were reconnected after midnight.

"I don't know how they remove the struts. They are bolted on, and they are soldered," said Mr Mahlanza. "These guys sell them. They make steel brackets out of them, and they use them for scotch cars [motorcycles]."

The first confirmed instance of a power outage was in Harare, then called Salisbury, two years ago. "It's getting out of hand," said Mr Mahlanza. "It's a regional problem and it's increasing."

There were no injuries and no known arrests yet from the Kafue incident, he said.

30 children die as bus plunges into Delhi river

India's perilous roads witness another tragedy
Christopher Thomas writes

THE deaths of 30 schoolchildren after a bus plunged off a Delhi bridge into the River Yamuna yesterday highlights the awful standards of driving and road safety in India.

There was outrage among parents whose children are daily put at risk by decrepit buses, ill-qualified drivers and virtual anarchy on the roads.

The bus was said by witnesses to have been speeding across the bridge, which was packed with morning rush-hour traffic, when it smashed through barriers and plunged 30ft into the sluggish Yamuna, now more of a sewer than a river.

Sixty-seven children were injured and 20 were missing. The driver and conductor were unhurt. The children were aged between six and 14. It was the ninth time this year that accidents involving packed buses have killed dozens of people.

People living in huts on the riverbank jumped into the water and managed to save about ten children. But rescue operations were delayed until sluice gates under the bridge could be closed.

The vehicle was carrying 120 children, double the legal limit, although such regulations are routinely ignored by bus operators trying to make extra profits.

The bus was hauled out of the river by crane as a final

search was carried out for bodies. Scores of brightly coloured schoolbags piled on the side of the road attracted crowds of sightseers.

The dead and injured were taken to the Bara Hindu Rao Hospital, but no doctors or officials were present. Pupils who went to visit friends shouted slogans against the hospital after rumours spread that two children who were alive had been sent to the mortuary by unqualified staff.

Ravinder Grewal, a senior policeman, said that the bus jumped the footpath and slid on patches of sand before crashing through the railings.

The children were on their way to the state Ludlow Castle Sarvodaya School, a modest establishment for lower middle-class children whose parents are able to raise the token attendance fee. It has 2,000 pupils.

Parents and relatives besieged the hospital trying to establish which children had been killed or injured, but encountered chaos as junior hospital staff attempted to summon nurses and doctors.

Parents were frantic some were told their children had been discharged, but their whereabouts were unknown. A few were wrongly informed that their children had been killed.

The hospital has meagre resources and there were ugly scenes as parents screamed for help for injured and dying children.

The Delhi administration announced payments of 100,000 rupees (£1,660) to the families of each dead child. The city's chief minister said it

was "most disturbing" that the bus was overloaded.

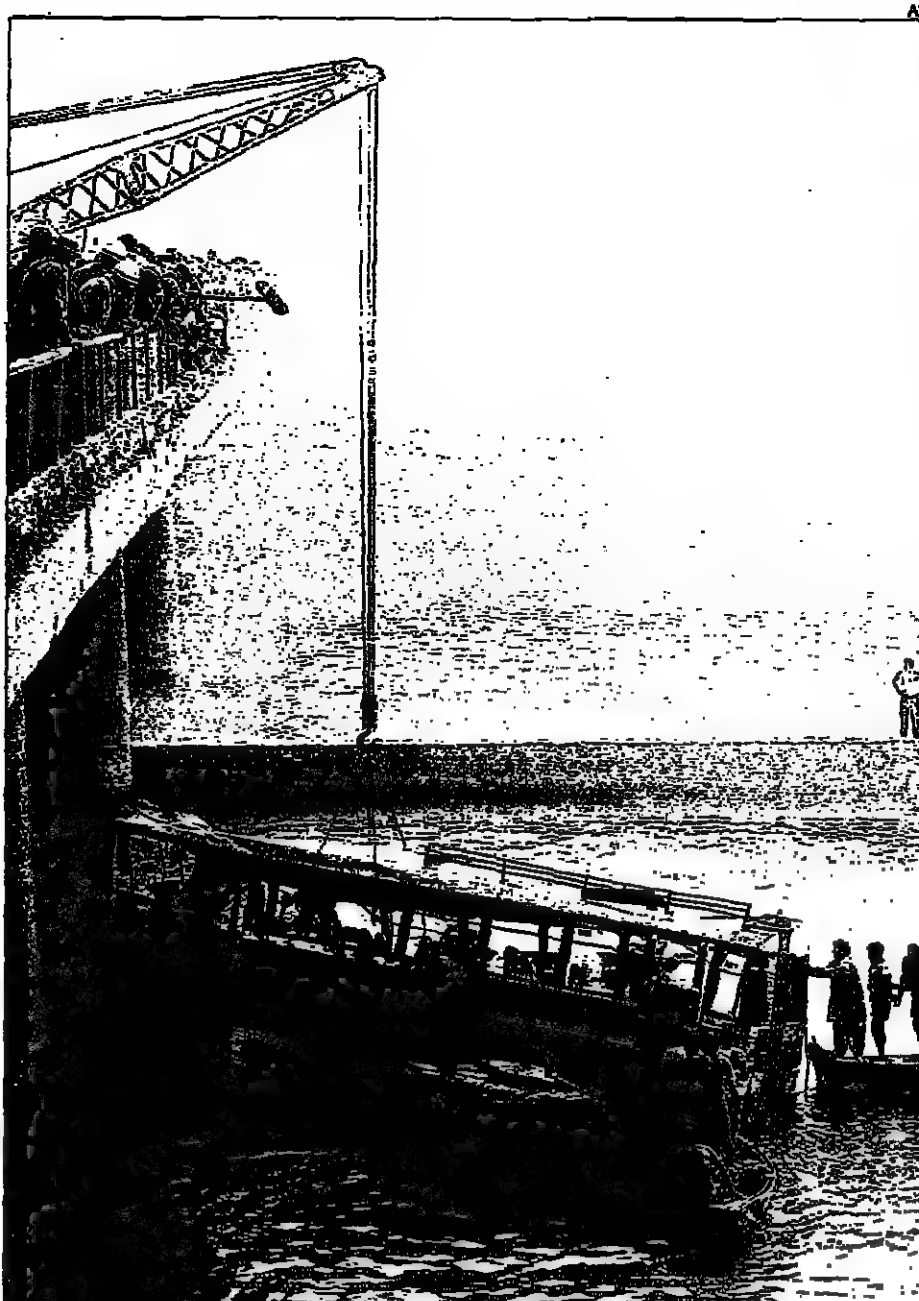
Under Kumar Gujral, the Prime Minister, joined leaders in expressing shock and grief. An official inquiry is being set up, but nothing is likely to end the worsening carnage on India's increasingly overburdened roads, which in Delhi are almost unpoliced because

of a shortage of manpower. Drunken driving, speeding and erratic behaviour are rarely punished.

Yesterday was the third disaster involving buses in two months. In September, 47 people died when a bus fell into the Krishna River in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh; on October 2 at least 41

people, including ten children, were killed when a bus plunged into a stream in the same state. The cause of such disasters is invariably linked to reckless driving.

Delhi's roads are considered to be among the most treacherous in the world. On average, six people die in road accidents in the city every day.



The bus is lifted from the Yamuna river in Delhi yesterday as rescuers continued to search for 20 missing victims. The driver and conductor survived the disaster.



Two fathers share their grief after being told they had lost their sons. Other parents faced hospital chaos.

Albright attacks Taliban oppression of women

The US Secretary of State has had some harsh words about attempts to turn Afghanistan into the purest Muslim country in the world, Ian Brodie writes

TALEBAN militants governing Afghanistan were denounced yesterday for their "despicable treatment of women and children" by Madeleine Albright, the American Secretary of State.

Seldom one to mince words, Ms Albright delivered her severe rebuke during her visit to neighbouring Pakistan. "I think it is very clear why we are opposed to the Taliban," she said at a press conference with Gohar Ayub Khan, the Pakistani Foreign Minister, in Islamabad.

She berated the Islamic extremists for their approach to human rights and their lack of respect for human dignity, which she described as reminiscent of the past rather than the way of the future.

Taliban was singled out as particularly oppressive in the latest State Department report on human rights

around the world. Controlling two thirds of Afghanistan, Taliban has put stringent curbs on women in what militants say is a crusade to create the world's purest Muslim state. Women must be heavily veiled and can work only in medical jobs. Even then, they are severely limited in their contacts with others.

Girls' schools have been closed on the ground that there is not enough money to educate women as well as men. To underscore her disdain for Taliban, Ms Albright visited a girls' school at a camp in Peshawar for Afghan refugees.

She encouraged Pakistan to use its influence with Taliban to open negotiations with rival Afghan factions so as to create an acceptable and broad-based government for the whole country. Pakistan said its talks with Ms Albright, who was the first US Secretary of State to visit the region for 14 years, were marked by candour and cordiality. The two countries have been at odds over Pakistan's purchase of missiles and nuclear technology from China. As a result, Washington blocked delivery of F16 fighters for which Pakistan has paid.

Ms Albright said America would try to nudge along Pakistan's dispute with India over Kashmir if asked to do so by both sides. She recalled that her father, Joseph Korbel, was a member of the first United Nations commission to tackle the Kashmir problem and she would very much like to see it resolved.

Ms Albright insisted on visiting Pakistan and India even though the earlier part of her journey had become an exhausting and unscheduled round of stops in the Middle East. She was trying to rebuild the tattered Gulf War coalition to deal with the showdown with President Saddam Hussein over United Nations weapons inspectors in Iraq.

Kabul: Taliban has ordered security forces in Kabul to close businesses and stop traffic by blocking main roads for prayers twice a day, official sources said yesterday. (AFP)



Albright rebuke came during Pakistan visit

P.W. Botha, 81, to marry woman 35 years his junior

FROM SAM KILEY IN JOHANNESBURG

DUBBED the "Great Crocodile" for his political cunning and tenacity when President of South Africa, P.W. Botha showed yesterday he could also match the reptile's reputation for longevity by announcing that he would marry a woman 35 years his junior.

Mr Botha, 81, one of apartheid's founding members, who also served the National Party Government as Minister of Defence and Prime Minister and was a member of the Nazi-sympathising Ossewabrandwag (Ossewa brandwag) during the Second World War, announced his engagement to Renette Te Water Naudé, 46, in the Afrikaans-language daily newspaper Beeld.

His relationship with Ms Naudé, a boarding-house manager, began soon after the death in June of his first wife, Elize, after 34 years of marriage.

The former South African President said that he had learnt at university that "luck was a bunch of grapes that had to be picked when it was



Naudé, Botha's fiancée, manages boarding house.

ripe". He told the newspaper: "I have experienced that many times."

However, Mr Botha's good fortune may be stretched as a result of his refusal to obey subpoenas to give evidence to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, set up after the 1994 elections to investigate and in some cases forgive human rights abuses under apartheid.

He said he did "not perform in circuses" after he was served with his first order to attend. But he was given a second chance after he also pleaded that he was medically unfit to appear after having a hip replaced.

Now back on his feet, his nuptial plans may be disrupted if he does not attend the commission hearing into the role of the State Security Council, which he chaired: he faces a heavy fine and two years in jail.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairman of the commission, has offered to move the hearings to George, about 200 miles east of Cape Town, which is closer to Mr Botha's home at the holiday resort of Wilderness.

The commissioners want to question him over the South African incursion into Angola in 1975 and whether he sanctioned the murder of anti-apartheid activists during his tenure as President from 1984 to 1989.

But the Great Crocodile has insisted that he will ignore subpoenas issued by the commission while he concentrates on Ms Naudé.

China may free second dissident

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKEY IN HONG KONG

BEIJING'S top spokesman on foreign affairs suggested yesterday that Wang Dan, China's second most famous dissident, might soon follow Wei Jingsheng to the US on "medical parole".

Speaking at the Foreign Ministry's weekly press conference, Shen Guofang, replying to a question about whether Mr Wang might be freed for medical treatment abroad, said: "I think this kind of situation in the past occurred frequently. In the future, I think it will continue."

Mr Shen's hint came within 24 hours of a remark by James Sasser, the US Ambassador in Beijing, that he felt optimistic that further political prisoners would be freed.

Mr Sasser had made a similar prediction shortly before Mr Wei was freed last Saturday.

Mr Wang, 28, one of the leaders of the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations after which he was jailed for four years, was re-imprisoned last year for 11 years for "subversion".

Somali flood toll rises

FROM AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE IN BARDERA, SOMALIA

THE confirmed death toll in flooding in southern Somalia rose to 1,265 yesterday, but aid agencies still had only three small boats on the flooded Juba River a month after it burst its banks. More were on the way, however, along with four helicopters hired from South Africa after an appeal to

governments around the world produced no offers.

Prices of basic foodstuffs had tripled in flooded regions and cereal crops were expected to be hit hard as torrential rains continued, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Programme in Rome. Donors have provided just under half the \$10 million (£6 million) that aid agencies were seeking.

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Holocaust survivor wins Swiss payment

FROM RICHARD BRESTON
IN MOSCOW

AN ELDERLY Jewish Holocaust survivor yesterday became the first of thousands of Eastern Europeans to receive compensation from Swiss banks eager to restore their image.

In an emotional ceremony in Riga, the Latvian capital, Elva Sefer, a frail 75-year-old, received \$400 (£235), the first instalment of a \$1,000 compensation package.

The Swiss banks established the \$200 million fund in response to allegations that they collaborated with Hitler and kept the assets from bank accounts belonging to Jews killed in the Holocaust.

Jerusalem: Israel's parliament threatened Israeli banks with prosecution yesterday if they persisted in refusing to identify the owners of dormant Nazi-era accounts. (AFP)

Gaddafi on trial in Berlin

The Libyan leader's role as a sponsor of terrorism is central to the disco bomb case, writes Roger Boyes



Police examine the wrecked Berlin disco: Colonel Gaddafi's regime is accused

East German secret police, says that a Palestinian, Yasser Shryadi, a member of the Libyan-sponsored terrorist group the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (General Command), paid his fellow Palestinian, Ali Chanaa, to assemble the 60lb bomb spiked with metal fragments. Mr Chanaa's German wife Verena identified which discotheques were frequented by US soldiers, the charge

sheet says. Frau Chanaa and her sister planted the bomb.

Mr Chanaa was a chauffeur at the Libyan Embassy in East Berlin. Musbah Eter, a Libyan diplomat, is charged with being an accomplice. It is his evidence that clinches the connection with Colonel Gaddafi as far as the prosecutor is concerned. In addition, American signals intelligence intercepted a message sent from the Libyan Embassy to Tripoli: "At 1.30 in the morning one of the acts was carried out with success, without leaving a trace."

The bombing of La Belle discotheque came against the backdrop of intense tension with America. A series of Libyan-backed terrorist attacks on airports had prompted the United States to stage naval manoeuvres off the North African coast. Two Libyan patrol boats were sunk.

The Libyans, according to the evidence presented yesterday, responded with the Berlin disco bombing. The trail of blood is said to have led ultimately to the blowing up of the PanAm plane over Lockerbie in December 1988.

Fourteen victims of the Berlin explosion, some of whom lost limbs in the blast, and their relations have taken civil action against Libya. Confident that the prosecutor's case against Libya is very strong—the prosecutor intends to name the country as a supporter of state terrorism—many victims plan to sue for compensation in American courts.

Colonel Gaddafi is thus set again to become a bugbear of the West. His involvement in terrorism goes back at least to 1971 when a British aircraft on its way from London to Khartoum was forced to land in Benghazi.

Among the groups that have benefited from Colonel Gaddafi's largesse are the Black September Palestinian group, the Eritrean Liberation Front, the Basque ETA and the IRA. Muslim rebels in the Philippines and radical groups in Chad, Thailand and Panama also benefited from Libyan money.



Ivanka Trump, daughter of multimillionaire Donald Trump, in a fashion show held outside the New York Stock Exchange. Her outfit featured ticker tape

Hillary Clinton tour

Live: Hillary Clinton wrapped up an eight-day visit to five former Soviet republics yesterday by announcing a new White House-United Nations campaign against prostitution. "It is a violation of human rights when women are forced into prostitution," she said about 1,000 people at the Livy Opera House. "We want to reach women who may be in dangerous situations." However she gave few details of the anti-prostitution campaign. (AP)

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Republicans block gay US ambassador

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S attempts to appoint the first openly homosexual ambassador ran into a conservative roadblock in Congress yesterday after Republicans objected to the candidate's long history of promoting gay rights.

James Hormel, the heir to a San Francisco Spam fortune, had been chosen by Mr Clinton to fill the less than taxing roll of United States Ambassador to the Luxembourg. His nomination had gone forward on the basis of personal assurances that he would neither push an activist agenda nor present his partner as an ambassadorial spouse.

In a deliberate snub to the White House, however, leading Senate Republicans have delayed his appointment, citing evidence of Mr Hormel's long and outspoken promotion of same-sex marriages and gay rights.

Under Parle Mesta, appointed by President Truman, the American Embassy became such a regular haunt for European socialites that Irving Berlin asked Ethel Merman to star in the title role of his musical, *Call Me Madam*, based on the entertaining exploits of the ambassador.

While the Luxembourg job is not high on the list of political priorities at the State Department, the country remains an important centre for banking and is a stopping

Clinton snubbed over posting to Luxembourg Tom Rhodes reports

point for numerous European dignitaries.

Mr Hormel, 64, chairman of the investment arm of Hormel Foods, a meatpacking and food processing giant in San Francisco, was a very big donor to the Democratic Party last year. His previous experience in diplomacy has been as an alternate in the United States delegation to the United Nations and a delegate to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Although Jesse Helms, the powerful chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, objected to his appointment, he had allowed the nomination to be considered because of personal assurances by the President.

But Senator James Inhofe, an Oklahoma Republican, and Senator Tim Hutchinson, his Arkansas colleague, raised 11th-hour protests about the nomination.

"He has been an outspoken promoter of things like same-

sex marriages, things we don't agree with," Mr Inhofe said.

Other nominations delayed by the Senate included those of Bill Lano Lee, the choice for civil rights chief at the Justice Department, who supports race and gender-based preference programmes, and David Satcher, Mr Clinton's pro-choice candidate for Surgeon General.

Gay rights organisations have rallied to Mr Hormel's support, accusing the Senate of discrimination. "He is completely qualified for the position," David Smith, of the Human Rights campaign, America's largest gay and lesbian organisation, said. "The only explanation why this has been held up is anti-gay bias."

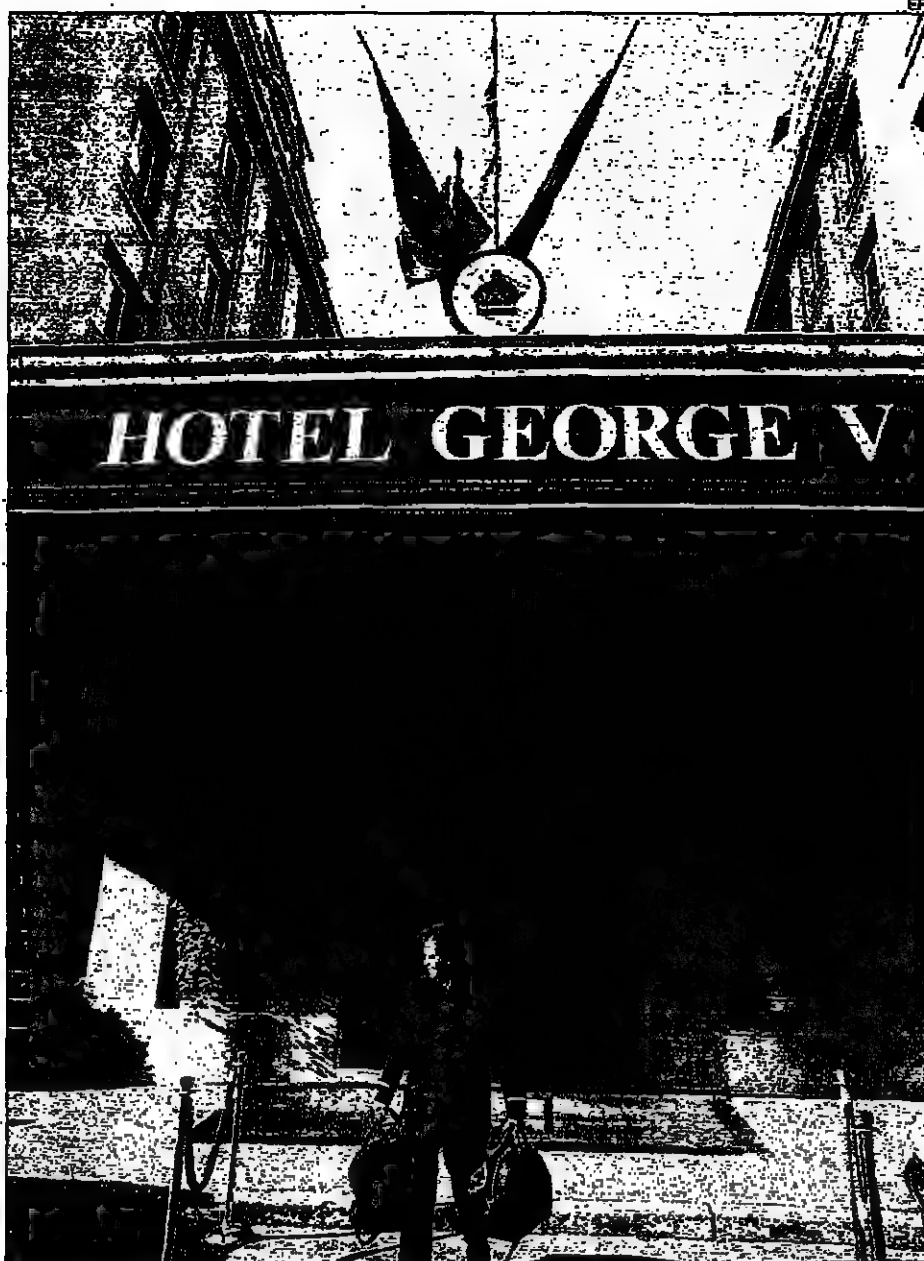
During his first term, Mr Clinton had considered appointing Mr Hormel to Fiji, but after the debate of his attempts to integrate gays into the military, the White House backed away from the nomination.

The present row comes soon after Mr Clinton tried once again to court America's homosexuals, becoming the first President to address a gay gala in Washington hosted, among others, by Ellen DeGeneres, the lesbian television personality.

The Hormel nomination will be considered again during the next session of Congress and after the dissenting senators have had time to consider his background.

British policy: Britain has no openly homosexual ambassadors and it is likely to be a long time before any are appointed. Until 1992 no declared homosexual was allowed to join the Foreign Office, because they were considered security risks (Michael Binyon writes).

It was only after the intervention of Sir Ian McKellen, the actor and gay rights activist, in 1992 that the Conservative Government lifted the ban. Homosexuals are now allowed to serve as diplomats provided they do not flaunt their lifestyle.



The planned refurbishment of the Hotel George V is expected to cost £30 million



Garbo: china dogs

Ellington: piano for sale

Image of Dietrich and Garbo's dogs star in hotel sale

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

AUCTIONEERS began selling the contents of the George V, the Paris hotel, this week, offering such rare items as a pair of china dogs from Greta Garbo's former room, the mirror that once reflected Marlene Dietrich and vast quantities of monogrammed cutlery.

The Saudi Arabian Prince Alwaleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, who bought the art deco hotel last year, has decreed that everything must go before a complete refurbishment of the property, which will take at least a year and cost about £30 million.

The sale, which started on Monday and continues until Thursday week, includes about 10,000 pieces of furniture and objets d'art, more

than 1,000 paintings and 3,000 items of tableware, much of it dating back to 1928 when the hotel off the Champs-Élysées opened.

The auction has stirred intense interest and more than 45,000 people flocked to a preview last weekend.

The high prices of some lots may be more a reflection of their celebrity associations than their intrinsic value. Among the more sought-after items are a Louis XV-style desk that John Wayne may have used; a 1930s table that happened to be in the same room as Audrey Hepburn; the Steinway piano on which Duke Ellington played, and the Louis XVI fire irons that President Eisenhower is said to have taken a shine to.

DNA tests reveal US caviare fraud

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

MUCH of the supposedly top-quality caviare sold in America is not what it seems, officials said yesterday.

A government laboratory known as the "Scotland Yard of Wildlife Crime" has discovered through DNA testing that eggs passed off as coming from beluga sturgeon in the Caspian Sea often come from a common US species known as Montana paddlefish.

The eggs from these hefty, slow-moving river fish, costing less than \$5 (£3) an ounce, are sent to Russia and Eastern Europe, re-packed in beluga

tins and shipped back to America to be sold for more than \$50 an ounce, officials said. The fraud was reported last week to Interpol by Ken Goddard, director of the federal Fish and Wildlife Forensic Laboratory in Oregon.

He originally devised the DNA tests genetically analysing caviare from Russia to protect endangered species. Then he discovered the fraud involving the paddlefish, which are related to sturgeon and get their name from their large snouts in the shape of a canoe paddle.

Eloping lover, 92, in court

FROM GILES WHITTILL IN LOS ANGELES

CHARLES BARNES fervently believes love conquers all, but in his case it is meeting stiff resistance in a Californian courtroom.

Mr Barnes, who walks with the aid of an aluminium frame, faces five days in jail and fines of up to \$45,000 (£30,000) for eloping with his girlfriend of nine years. Their combined age is 176.

Accompanied by a throng of elderly well-wishers, Mr Barnes, handsome and alert at 92, spent Monday in a Los Angeles court where lawyers for his new wife's guardians asked a judge to order that she be moved back to the nursing home where they had sent her. Constance Driscoll, 84, was

living in a remote northern Californian town under orders from the conservators of her \$800,000 estate when Mr Barnes absconded with her in September. After what he said was a nine-year courtship, they were married in her home town of Glendale, a Los Angeles suburb 500 miles from her nursing home, where Mr Barnes also lives and where he has since found full-time care for her in another nursing home.

Outside court, the pastor who presided at their wedding pleaded allegiance to a higher law than California's civil code. "I performed that ceremony because they love each other," Pastor Jack Dabner of

Glendale's United Community Church told yesterday's *Los Angeles Times*. Mr Barnes could be made to pay the conservators' \$46,000 legal bill in addition to any fines if the courts find against him. The case will be heard again in Superior Court next month.

"Love will prevail," the nonagenarian declared after the hearing, adding that he was independently wealthy and wanted to "be with Connie, not her money." His bride has Alzheimer's disease and short-term memory loss, but appears to know whom she has married. "When I asked her who she was," a friend said outside court, "she said 'Mrs Charles Barnes'."



James Hormel at the opening of the gay and lesbian centre in San Francisco's main library last year

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They have tattoos, swill lager and swear. They also chant plainsong in Latin

Mediaeval Baebes are classical music's Spice Girls. Interview by Nigel Williamson

Their appeal lies somewhere between Radio 3 and TGI Friday and their target audience ranges from Gramophone subscribers to readers of Loaded. Sex has been used to sell classical music before — look at the cover of any Vanessa-Mae album — but there has never been anything quite like the Mediaeval Baebes. Imagine the Spice Girls singing madrigals and you begin to get the idea.

But if all is far from well in Spiceworld, over at Baebes Castle life looks as sweet as a syllabub. The debut album by the Mediaeval Baebes, released last week, is confidently predicted by industry insiders to storm straight to the top of the classical chart, leaving the likes of the LSO and Simon Rattle trailing.

The group's success is built on a formula so obvious that you wonder why no one thought of it before. An album of Latin plainsong recorded by 12 raunchy women in their mid-twenties, who shared some distinctly dodgy pasts, was always going to grab attention. Decorate the album with semi-naked poses alongside the religious medieval poetry and you have an instant controversy. Release it six weeks before Christmas, add the marketing expertise of Virgin Records (where the

Baebes are label mates with the Spice Girls) and you have a bestselling popular phenomenon. And like the Girls, the Baebes are already preparing for the backlash.

"The classical world is elitist. They think you have to go through a lot of training to sing this music," says Rachel Van Asch, 26, who happily admits that until 12 months ago she had sung only in her bath. "We've proved that is not the case, and I know they are going to put the boot in. But if they are so intolerant and jealous, that's their problem."

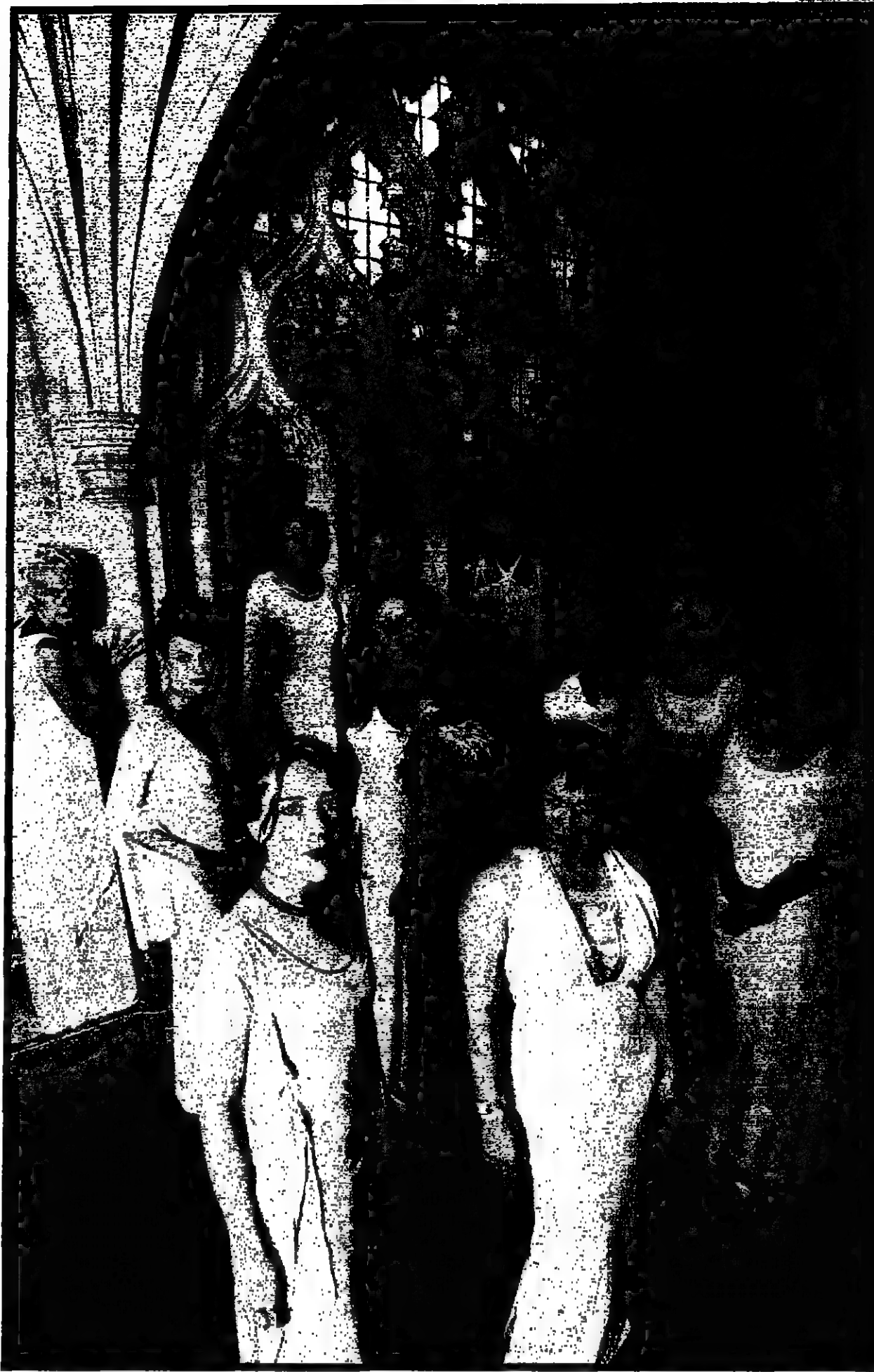
The Baebes clearly share more than a record label with the Spice Girls, and Nicole Frobusch, 27, who trained as a dancer rather than a singer and has a dragon tattooed on her upper arm, displays a similarly spiky attitude. "A classical training can be limiting. It takes the joy out of it if you are concentrating on perfection all the time. You don't need to read music because singing is very natural. It just goes up and down, doesn't it?"

Apart from Katharine Blake, 27, the group's leader and musical arranger, who studied at the Purcell School of Music and the Guildhall, none of the other Baebes has any formal musical training. Their CVs are more in the "school of life" vein — one was a go-go dancer at a club called Cairo Jack's, there are a couple of fire-eaters, a witch, several who are into ritual magic and a couple of members of an alternative rock band, Miranda Sex Garden.

"To be honest I didn't know there was a classical chart until we were told we were top of it," Ms Van Asch says.

The Spice Girls comparisons are irresistible. The music the Baebes sing may come from different centuries but they draw on the same vocabulary of feminine empowerment, use their sexuality in equally upfront fashion and share an uninhibited, girls-behaving-badly attitude. "Lager-swilling, smoking, cursing, tattooed sex goddesses," their PR company called them, and when Virgin organised a showcase at a London club last month to parade its new signing before industry insiders, the Baebes lived up to the image. They were accused of forcing open a locked bar and making off with large quantities of alcohol.

"That's not true," Ms Van Asch says indignantly. "We



The Baebes employ the same vocabulary of female empowerment as the Spice Girls and share a girls-behaving-badly attitude

didn't force any lock. They left the booze blatantly on display, and being opportunistic women who like a drink, we took it." Ms Blake joins the protest: "What did they expect when they left the beers in a room full of pissed-up women? It served them right for being so morose."

Their only objection to the Spice Girls comparisons is the idea that the Baebes are similarly manufactured.

There was no formula and no auditions, just a bunch of friends, says Ms Blake. "I had performed in a medieval band before but I wanted to make it more showbiz. The people I recruited were the people I was hanging around with, and we started 18 months ago by going to Hampstead Heath, having picnics and singing together. It wasn't really a business plan initially, it was just for fun."

She then set about training her new recruits with help from a voice coach at London's Trinity College of Music. The record deal came via a recommendation from Don Mousseu, who had masterminded Michael Nyman's rise to fame and already knew Ms Blake. On the album Mr Mousseu is credited with "project development" but Ms Blake denies he

is a Simon Fuller figure, orchestrating their every move. "We don't have a manager. We have an informal arrangement with him but we haven't signed a contractual deal. Because we are signed to Virgin, people think the label is pulling the strings. They find it hard to believe that we created ourselves."

Virgin may not have manufactured the Baebes but it swiftly saw the potential. "They were looking for this year's Christmas album and they found us. But they haven't imposed this image on us. There was no commercial decision to be sexy. We just are," says Ms Blake. Ms Van Asch, who also makes their slinky white stage dresses, reinforces the point: "We are not trying to be all sassy when we are actually a bunch of nuns. We are genuinely a raunchy bunch of birds and that empowers the music and has put a bit of gusto into it."

Ah, the music. The reviews of the album are just starting to appear and the Baebes are bracing themselves for a hammering from the classical press. Even the untrained ear can tell that they sound more like a good school choir than professionally trained singers.

"The spirit is the important thing. We wanted to make this music fun, and the critics won't like that. Most of these girls hadn't even heard medieval music a year ago. I felt uncomfortable in the classical world because it is very insular. I wanted to take the knowledge that I learnt outside," Ms Blake says.

The Baebes are now preparing for a tour to capitalise on the album's success, but controversy has already dogged them. Plans to play in a number of churches have been jeopardised by revelations that one of the Baebes, Carmen Schneider, describes herself as a "witch" while several others confess to dabbling in the occult.

Such apparently deliberate courting of notoriety raises suspicions of a publicity stunt. "Several of us perform magic rituals. We've done a lot of positive magic, it's not evil. We don't pray to Satan," Ms Van Asch says.

The banter that follows suggests they are not entirely serious. "How do you think we got this record deal?" asks Ms Blake. A giggling voice cries a pint of baby's blood in the bathroom. Predictably, there have been rent-a-quote clerics ready to rise to the bait and condemn their "paganism".

Ms Van Asch says: "They're shaking with anger but we're not sure why. The Church seems to have a problem with us selling God's music with

this sexy image. Everyone can relate to our sexuality but the Church is not seeing the benefits. We're doing it a favour but it's terrified of 12 strong-minded, sexy women and I can see we might be a scary concept."

Which seems to bring us back to the Spice Girls. "There are parallels but it's not girl power, we're into princess power. Chivalry, not shopping," Ms Van Asch says. Such perfectly formed soundbites bear the hallmark of the overworked imagination of the professional PR but Ms Blake denies it. "There is a romance to the medieval period and everyone in the band is deeply romantic. Our images are not chastity belts but dragons and hand-some knights. We want to encourage chivalry and honour. I'm not surprised by our success because the romance of princesses in castles has a universal appeal. It's everyone's fantasy."

One last time I ask whether their nascent career hasn't all been planned around a cynical marketing of "that" fantasy. "Our only formula is to be talented, sexy and clever all at the same time," Ms Van Asch declares.

"And with humility and a sense of humour," Ms Blake adds. Easy, really.

© Salva Nos by the Mediaeval Baebes is released on Virgin.

New Barbie — for feminists

ONE'S view of the world is necessarily coloured by one's experiences. The fact that mine has been a lurid, tacky, Schiaparelli-if-only-pink for some time I thought was a personal development, the tonal stages I had to go through as the Calpol stains gave way to wall-to-wall Barbie.

But, I see now, the whole world's gone Barbie. A row of terraced houses in Salford — and that's both sides of the street — has been painted Barbie pink and even The Conran Shop stocks a serious artbook depicting the doll as collectable. And we know that if Sir Terence has clocked it, it's cool.

But more: the manufacturers, Mattel, announce that a new Barbie, with a

just to show that New Barbie is going to be more radical than anyone thought, out goes the Miss Texas 1983 hair.

If you were interested in this from a Barbie-centric perspective, you could ask whether the new Barbie will still be the Barbie we know, the one that sells at the rate of two per second. I suspect she will. We adults are all obsessed by her looks: what little girls like is the dressing up. A new doll means a whole new wardrobe: why should they complain?

But it's the guff that's spoken about her from a sexual-political angle that worries me more. The general consensus seems to be that Barbie is to have a boob job "and that should keep

Nigella Lawson

new streamlined figure and remodelled face, is to be exhibited at an American toy fair in the new year and the press is beside itself with speculation. This is no longer just a good story: it's significant.

Well, Kate Millett it isn't, but this is the deal, significance-wise. The doll we have now, Mattel, has a disproportionately curvaceous figure. Well, she would, she's a doll, you could argue. But that's not what her detractors mean. They mean that if dolly-shape were translated into human dimensions, her statistics would read 38-18-34. This, I grant you, would be improbable. The new Barbie is to do away with such an unrealistic figure: her measurements are scaled down, to be 34-22-33. I leave it to you to decide whether this is an any more healthy image to propagate.

To go with the body, a new face is being organised. And

the feminists happy? Excuse me, but why? Look, I know that a peculiar school of self-loathing feminists have always viewed the female form as something to get angry about, but that doesn't mean the rest of us should go along with it. But they do. A woman I worked for once remarked on some Page Three girl or other's "improbable and insulting statistics". I understand why the Page Three girl should have come in for some ideological stick, but I have never quite understood why being privately bosomy should be thought to be an anti-feminist act.

Sorry to be a bore, but what feminism teaches is to be alert to meanings that are appended to things, the inferences that are routinely drawn from appearances. What's the point if we just carry on making the same inferences, drawing the same conclusions?

A peerless show of hypocrisy

SOME things we know: politicians have no sense of shame; what they lack there, they more than make up for with self-importance. This much we expect, and were these expectations simply met, there would be no need to remark on it. But Roy Hattersley goes off the scale.

Right off it is: he compares himself "into sense" as yet uncharted "stratagems" of "ridiculous" how could he pompously in such a way as to guarantee that even the terminally unimpeachable be left cringing.

Now, there is nothing wrong in wanting to have the House of Lords abolished. Some of my best friends want to see the House of Lords abolished. But if they do, they don't accept peerages. Or perhaps, that isn't quite true: I think they may, but they go quietly, with the decency to be silenced by their hypocrisy. Where Hattersley is wrong is in thinking that by making a fuss he is absolving himself of any want of decency or sensibility.

He confesses to "harming hysterical every time I think of taking any oath of allegiance". Should we be grateful, then, that he is to style himself, from Monday, Lord Hattersley of Sparkbrook? I rather think he feels we ought.

I suspect, too, that he finds his moral standing is fully protected by the heavy underlayer of irony called into facelious play here. But no amount of bluster can hide

the fact that he chose to accept his peerage. I don't wish to imply that he should have turned his down, but what we shouldn't have to witness is the struggle between him and this putative conscience, culminating in the ignoble triumph of the former over the latter.

It is customary to lament the passing of the old Left — of which Hattersley is an undistinguished relic — and to mourn its ideals of decency and integrity, lost or discarded by an opportunistic new Labour Party.

Oh really? Give me Peter Mandelson any day.

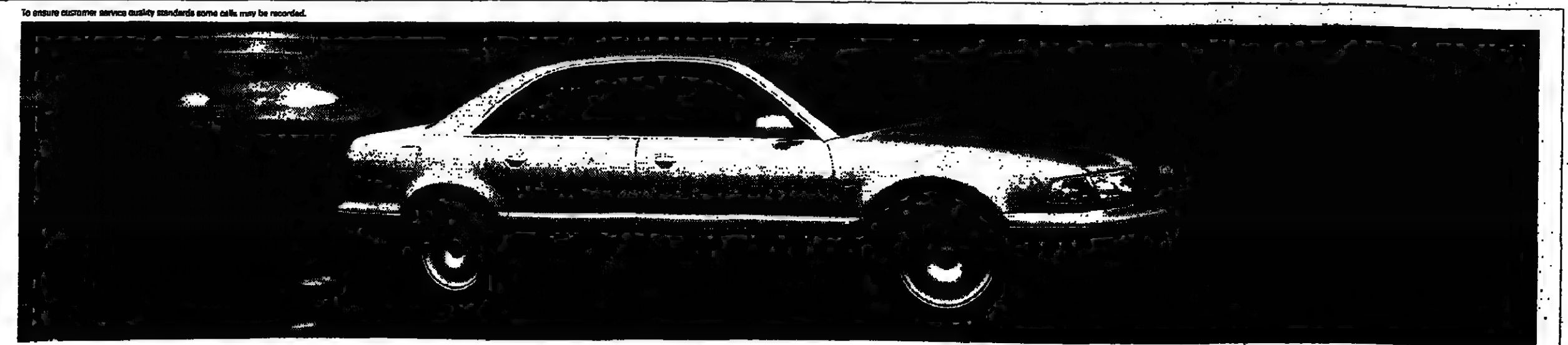
A denial of human rights

A MAN is currently trying to stop his borough council giving a close-circuit television film of his suicide attempt to the BBC programme Crime Beat. Since I can buy videos of people speeding, without their permission, it is obvious that far from living in the post-permissive age, we are living in a cruelly unforgiving and almost fundamentalist one: any misdemeanour seems enough to deny anyone the basic liberal rights.

Speeding is one thing — although the principle should be enough — but to be able to publicise human fallibility to the extent of broadcasting someone's suicide attempt is distasteful to the point of decadence.



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The newly ennobled Baroness Linklater of Butterstone and the previous Mr and Mrs Linklater: "I have been shifted below the salt. I have taken to falling a step or two behind her, hands clasped behind my back, Prince Philip-style"

There's a new lady in my life

I have never been strongly aware, until now, of being a commoner. It is after all, a relatively familiar state to which most of us become easily attached. Now, however, I am acutely conscious of it. My life has acquired a titular imbalance: my wife has become a baroness. Previously known as Mrs. . . . I introduce you to Mr and Mrs Linklater" she is now the Baroness Linklater, as in "May I introduce you to Baroness Linklater, and to . . ."

The other day the first

invitation arrived for "Lady Linklater and guest." I have been shifted below the salt. I have taken to falling back a step or two behind her, hands clasped behind my back, Prince Philip-style. Any moment now I expect to hear myself saying "How do you do? Have you come far?"

The whole thing has been a bizarre introduction to the upper echelons of the British class system and the rituals of ennoblement — fascinating, not least because it has happened just as the House of Lords contemplates its pos-

Mysterious phone calls, embossed letters and strange rituals — Magnus Linklater finds it hard to adjust to life as a commoner when his wife is invited to become a working peer

sible *fin de saison*: If Tony Blair means what he says, this could be the last generation we shall see of life peers rubbing ermined shoulders with the hereditary variety. While those who have been born and bred to the peerage will be barred from the chamber, my wife will not. She has a very

splendid green seal in a large red box to prove it, and a letter patent which states that she holds "the said name state degree style dignity title and honour . . . to have and to hold unto her for her life".

holiday, cut off from the outside world save for an ancient telephone linked to a somewhat unstable aerial on a nearby hill. A crackling call came through one evening from Paddy Ashdown, leader of the Liberal Democrats. "Are you sitting down?" he asked my wife. "We would like you to be a working peer . . . we need an answer in 24 hours."

waiting to reclaim it. Nor could she be plain Lady Linklater, since Lyon had discovered a "Linklater of that ilk" lurking in the genealogical undergrowth, and you couldn't have two. So she opted for "Linklater of Butterstone"—the name of the village where she has founded a school. It sounded cumbersome, but Garner approved.

human status, as in "The House would not, on the whole, approve..." Libraries, book-lined corridors, old portraits and impeccable service give you the impression that time has stood still in the grandest of country houses.

Sitting in the Strangers' Gallery, looking down from behind the Wool-sack, took one back even further. All that could be seen of the Lord Chancellor was an ancient grey wig and a black tricorn hat. He looked Hogarthian, a figure

on. There followed a lengthy peroration, welcoming her to the House on behalf of Her Majesty, and including an intriguing reference to the "arduous and urgent affairs" of the present time and "dangers impending". No one was quite clear what this referred to, unless it was Mr Blair's reform plans. Finally, she approached the Woolf sack and shook hands with the Lord Chancellor. There was a graying rumble of "hear-hears". She was in — for life.

The only other surprise was to note that one of the other peers being introduced that day had been given the name "Lord Simpson of Dunkeld"—the title said to be unavailable to my wife.

Clearly there is one law north of the border and another south of it. It is time that Lyon spoke to Garter. Or perhaps he should roar.

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The question of a title loomed large. The most important new figure in our lives became Sir Garter King of Arms, known in the trade as "Garter". He had the ultimate say over my wife's new name. She had to be baroness of somewhere. The question was where. It gave me my first opportunity for a House of Lords joke. "It's up to Garter," I would say. "But I dare say he'll be fairly elastic." The joke turns out not to be original.

Since my wife wanted a Scottish name as her title, she went to see Garter's main heraldic rival, the Lord Lyon King of Arms (known, of course, as "Lyon"), whose remit covers Scotland. Originally she wondered whether she could be "Lady Linklater of Dunkeld" (the nearest town to her home in Perthshire). This, it emerged, was out of the question, since there had been a Jacobite Lord Dunkeld at the Battle of Killcrankie in 1699, and although he had been forced into exile after the defeat of the Highland rebels, and died in France, there might be heirs and successors



Into the war zone:
Stephen Dillane had
grave misgivings
about impersonating
ITN reporter Michael
Nicholson in *Welcome
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Arts, page 40

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Why Europe can't afford the euro

Milton Friedman explains the danger of a common currency

A common currency is an excellent monetary arrangement under some circumstances, a poor one under others. Whether it is good or bad depends primarily on the adjustment mechanisms that are available to absorb the economic shocks and dislocations that impinge on the entities considering such a currency.

Flexible exchange rates are a powerful adjustment mechanism for shocks that affect the entities differently. It is worth dispensing with this mechanism to gain the advantage of lower transaction costs and external discipline only if there are adequate alternatives.

The United States is an example of a situation that is favourable to a common currency. Although composed of 50 states, its residents overwhelmingly speak the same language, listen to the same television programmes, see the same movies, can and do move freely from one part of the country to another. Goods and capital move freely from state to state, wages and prices are moderately flexible, and the national Government raises in taxes and spends roughly twice as much as state and local governments. Fiscal

say, lower wages relative to other countries, that can be achieved by a change in one price, the exchange rate, rather than by requiring changes in thousands of thousands of separate wage rates, or the emigration of labour. The hardships imposed on France by its "franc fort" policy illustrate the cost of a politically inspired determination not to use the exchange rate to adjust to the impact of German unification. Britain's economic growth after it abandoned the exchange-rate mechanism a few years ago to refloat the pound illustrates the effectiveness of the exchange rate as an adjustment mechanism.

Proponents of the euro often cite the gold standard era from 1870 to 1914 as demonstrating the benefits of a common currency. But the gold standard also had its costs. The period was characterised by declining prices from 1870 to 1896, rising prices thereafter, and sharp fluctuations within each period.

The standard was viable only because governments were small (spending about 10 per cent of the national income, rather than 50 per cent or more, as now), prices and wages were highly flexible and the public was willing to tolerate, or had no way to moderate, wide swings in output and employment. Take away the rose-coloured glasses and it was hardly a system to emulate.

The drive for the euro is political, not economic

Unexpected shocks may well affect one part of the United States more than others — as, for example, the Middle East embargo on oil did in the 1970s, creating an increased demand for labour and boom conditions in some states, such as Texas, and unemployment and depressed conditions in others, such as the oil-importing states of the industrial Midwest. The different short-run effects were soon mediated by movements of people and goods, by offsetting financial flows from the national to the state and local governments, and by adjustments in prices and wages.

In contrast, Europe exemplifies a situation unfavourable to a common currency. It is composed of separate nations, speaking different languages, with different customs, and having citizens feeling far greater loyalty and attachment to their own country than to a common market or to the idea of "Europe". Despite being a free-trade area, goods and capital move less freely than in the United States.

The European Commission based in Brussels, indeed, spends only a fraction of the total spent by national governments in the member countries. They, not the European bureaucracies, are the important political entities.

Moreover, regulation of industry and employment is more extensive than in the United States, and differs far more from country to country than between American states. As a result, wages and prices in Europe are more rigid, and labour less mobile. In those circumstances, flexible exchange rates provide an extremely useful adjustment mechanism.

If one country is affected by negative shocks that call for,

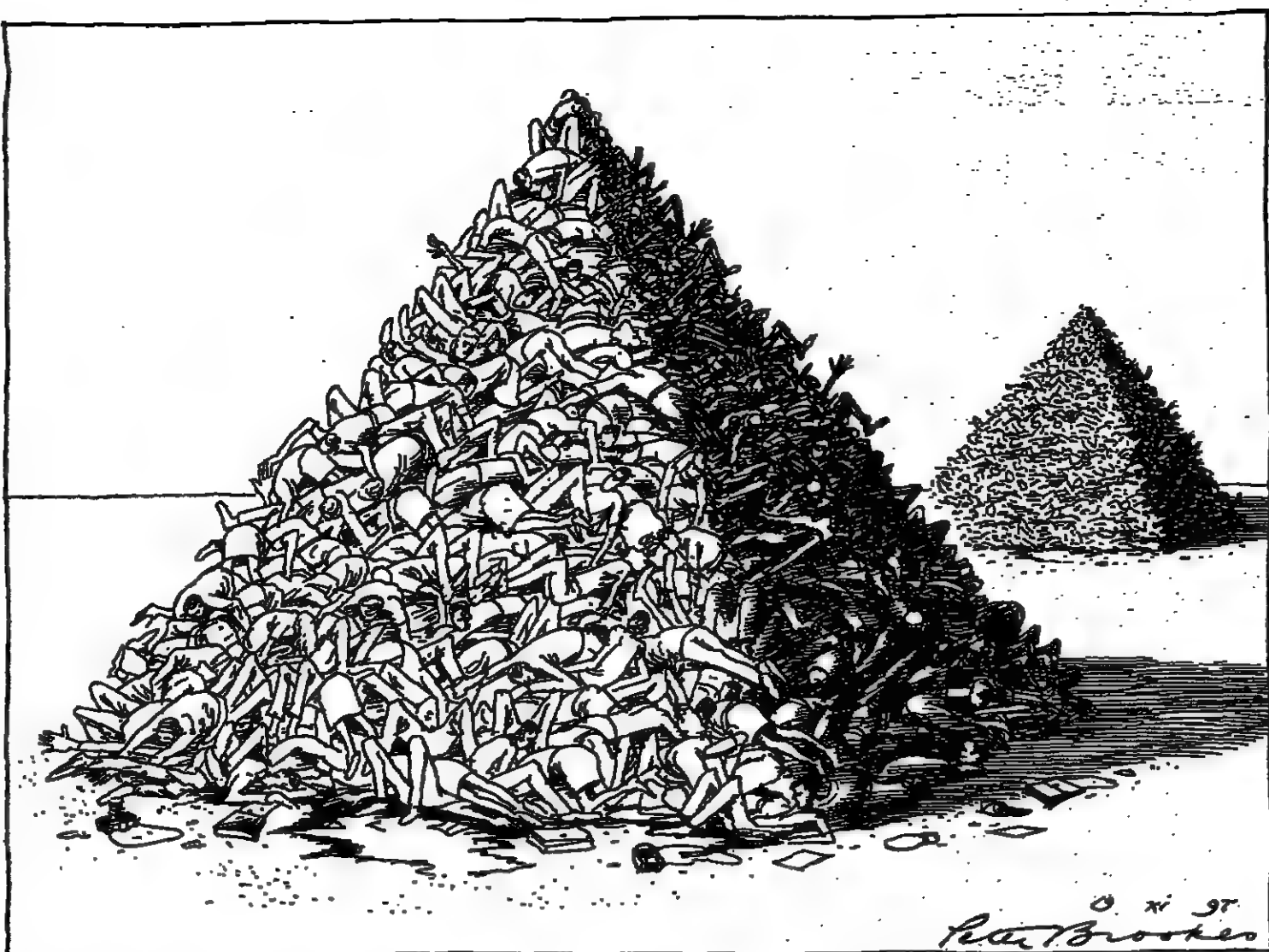
As of today, a subgroup of the European Union — perhaps Germany, the Benelux countries and Austria — come closer to satisfying the conditions favourable to a common currency than does the union as a whole. And they also have the equivalent of a common currency.

Austria and the Benelux three have, to all intents and purposes, linked their currencies to the mark. However, these countries retain their central banks and hence can break the link at will. Any country that wishes to link to the mark more firmly can do so on its own, simply by replacing its central bank with a currency board, as some countries (such as Estonia) outside the EU have done.

The drive for the euro has been motivated by politics, not economics. The aim has been to link Germany and France so closely as to make a future European war impossible. In Brussels, indeed, the stage for a federal United States of Europe. I believe that adoption of the euro would have the opposite effect.

It would exacerbate political tensions by converting divergent shocks that could have been readily accommodated by exchange-rate changes into divisive political issues. Political unity can pave the way for monetary unity. Monetary unity imposed under unfavourable conditions will prove a barrier to the achievement of political unity.

The author is a Nobel laureate in economics and a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford.



Hysteria calls the shots

Over-reaction to the Luxor massacre would be to give in to terrorism

When the Assyrian warrior Ashurbanipal descended on Thebes in the 7th century BC, he razed it to the ground. This first great terrorist boasted that he took the entire city, "silver, gold, precious stones, costly garments, great horses, men and women, obelisks covered with carving... and brought them to Assyria". The sack of Thebes appalled the Mediterranean world by its cruelty. Children were dashed to pieces on the streets. Noblemen were sold by lot. "Her strength was infinite," wrote the prophet Nahum of Thebes, "yet she was carried away into captivity".

Monday's massacre on the site of that city saw a new Assyrian terror, from fanatical opponents of Islamic reform. But whereas Ashurbanipal terrorised by laying waste an entire city, the death squads of Jamaa Islamiyya needed only to machine-gun a busload of Western tourists. Any blood is news. But Western blood travels the globe. A dead Westerner is a media ticket to ride. Ten thousand Algerians may have died in a similar cause, a hundred thousand Afghans, a million across the Arab world. No matter. In the grim calculus of media values, a dead Westerner is worth a thousand Arabs. His corpse demands a headline and clears a page to shout his killer's cause.

There is no Westerner so productive of publicity as a tourist. Few identify with a murdered businessman or diplomat. A murdered tourist is one of us. He inhabits the same glass capsule from which we too see the outside world, travelling with our minibuses, our tour guides, our broken English, our lists of familiar sites and formulaic hotels. We know these places. The path to the Sphinx, the Corniche at Luxor, the drive to the Valley of the Kings are corners of a foreign field that have become for ever England. Machine gun us there and you machine gun us in our backyard, surrounded by cultural family and friends.

This is the core of the fundamentalists' case. Islam is threatened by an imperialism even more menacing to its dogma than the political imperialism of the 19th century. Mass tourism is the agency of this aggression. The tourist is not a neutral bystander in the religious wars now being fought across the Islamic world. He is a participant. The Temple of Hatshepsut, where Monday's atrocity occurred, no longer "belongs" to Egypt

but to the world. It is being restored by European archaeologists with Unesco money. To the fundamentalist, Luxor is a cultural colony, occupied by the armies of world tourism.

I have just been in Bhutan in the Himalayas, where a Buddhist monarchy is desperate to resist tourist pollution of its culture. Bhutan bans television and insists its citizens wear traditional dress. Tourists are rationed to a meagre 4,000 visas a year. Egypt, in contrast, welcomes four million tourists, and \$2 billion in foreign exchange. Tourism is the backbone of the economy, supporting a fifth of the population. Such wealth inevitably Westernises and secularises the country; this, too, is Government policy. But to every policy there is an opposition. While Bhutanese tourism is rationed by the Government, Egyptian tourism is this week rationed by the gun.

The initial foreign reaction to Monday's event was predictably irrational. The Luxor murders may have been different only in number from a dozen attacks on tourists in Egypt over the past five years. Yet statistical terrorism took hold. Story dead was not just six times "more" than when ten tourists died in a similar attack last September, but ten times "worse". A murderer had become a massacre. We feel obliged to inflate our horror.

As the media blazoned the news round the world, tour companies organised flights to remove their clients from the scene. A mortified Foreign Office said people should leave Luxor as their "security could not be guaranteed". The implication that security was "guaranteed" before the killings but not after was ridiculous. No matter. Public statements at such times must synchronise with hysteria. The only sane voice I heard was from a Manchester woman in a Luxor hotel. She insisted her holiday would continue, because to pull out would "double the misery this tragedy has

caused the Egyptians we have met". Would that someone in authority had said the same.

True, a holiday is supposedly about relaxation and freedom from care. The last quality it should require is bravado. Tourism is also a marginal activity, its decisions bordering on the whimsical. In the 1970s, the IRA decided that dead Irish men and women were losing their media appeal, and that dead Americans might do better. It exploded bombs and killed tourists in London, wiping millions from Britain's overseas account because Americans stayed away, in tens of thousands.

Murderers fuelled with American money were inflicting less danger on visitors than drunk drivers on a Saturday night. Yet Americans believed that the West End had a bomb in every restaurant and a grenade in every pub. The tourist is no great student of probability theory. He just wants to feel good. When Mother Hysteria is calling the shots nobody looks at a risk assessment.

Such unreason is oxygen to the terrorist. Trotsky argued that the key to revolution was to manoeuvre the weapons at your disposal to convert apparent weakness into strength. Globalisation of publicity has offered the crank and the fraud a vast realm in which to market their message. In recent years this has meant hijacked planes, kidnapped students, contaminated food, hacked mainframes and corrupted computers, with the media in unrestrained support. Yet even in this high-tech age, nothing has the global appeal of the most old-fashioned weapon of terror — a picture of a blood-stained body in the street, product of a bullet or a bomb.

The tourist cannot stand aloof from this process. His is the biggest global industry, whose impact on poor countries is benign or devastating according to point of view. (The green lobby worries about Third World products, rarely about Third World services.) The tourist may be no more than a pawn in a political game, but even pawns can move and kill. The

Simon Jenkins

behaviour, spending pattern and sheer quantity of Middle East tourism is central to the case of Islamic conservatives against their victim regimes. They want the tourists gone.

Visitors to Egypt may deceive themselves that they are mute hedonists, mere spectators of the march of history. They should be disabused. Their money and presence fuels social change. Indeed, if pressed, they would probably agree that foreign exchange and capitalism are good for Egypt and the more of it, the sooner the better. The youthful Grand Tourist in the 18th century was enjoined not to confine his attention to art. He should enquire and learn about the political and social life of the countries through which he travelled, thus to broaden his mind. He was entering its "society" and should know what he was doing.

Ever since Thomas Cook sent travellers to Luxor in the last century, Britain has involved itself in Egyptian politics, as tourist as well as colonial power. The spectacle of Britons scuttling out of Egypt this week with fanatics at their heels was undignified — the more so when impelled by commercial and diplomatic "advice". It was precisely what the gunmen would have wanted, and precisely what the forces of order, moderation and reform most feared.

I remember being outraged when Americans scuttled from London during the IRA bombing campaign. They were, I thought, both cowardly and irrational. They were safer in London than in any American city. America was not just financing IRA terror but dancing to its murderous tune. By the same token all lovers of Egypt should now flock to Luxor. The place is no more or less dangerous than it was last week. The odds on getting machine-gunned are infinitesimally small, and less than a hundred other risks we take each day. To join the boycott is to join the terrorist in his odious campaign. It tells him that his tactic works.

Shelley's mythical Ozymandias ruled on this same plain at Luxor, where the poet envisaged "the wrinkled lip, the sneer of cold command". Such is the murderer's machine gun. That gun is now seeking to end Europe's most recent imperial journey up the Nile. It would be a grim legacy if a boycott indeed helped turn Egypt fundamentalist. If it left at Luxor only "the decay of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare", the empty hotels and wrecked cruisers of a transient, thoughtless tourism.

Alan Coren



What has driven Labour to join in this whole sorry business?

Yes, of course we shall all remember where we were on the day the Prime Minister of Great Britain said he was sorry. How could we not? We were all eating our Sunday lunches and staring at our tableside tubes. And when he said he was sorry, all our jaws fell open, and all our forks paused in mid-air, leaving the roast beef of Old England and the poached squid of new Labour trembling alike on all our tines. Many of us will have started weeping. It is what we do, these days. Indeed, after we had recovered somewhat and blown our noses, not a few of us will have risen from the table to light a candle for him, or rummage in a nearby drawer for yellow ribbon; possibly both.

And thus, again as we had so deftly been into quivering empathy with the pretty straight guy he had just reminded us that he was, it occurred to none of us to ask ourselves the only question he did not address. I do not blame the rest of you for not asking it. I did not ask it myself until a good hour later, when still stifling the odd sob, I was exhuming the geraniums in my front garden and some adolescent maniac in a howling rustbucket came belting down our suburban hill at a shade under 200mph, braked for the corner, spun through 360 degrees, stalled, and then shot squealing off again, no doubt to take a second crack at suicide somewhere else. It was only then, as the reek of burnt rubber and the drunk of dangling exhaust fumes faded on the air, that the unasked, unanswered question burst upon me. It wasn't about accepting fast donations from caringly subsidised businesses, it wasn't about misleading Parliament over second similar donations, it wasn't about the fitness of assorted insider interests with which these donations might be fraught, it wasn't about the broken, electoral, promises, of countless wordy weasels, it was about what in God's name the Labour Party thought it was doing by getting into bed with motor racing.

Last week, in one of the myriad sidebars to the present shenanigans, the Cancer Research Campaign announced incontrovertible evidence that teenage motor racing fans smoked twice as much as their unfan peer group. No surprise there: the symbiosis between spuriously glamorous death-defying pastimes is clear enough, ask any adman, but what had particularly dismayed the CRC was that motor racing was the fastest-growing teenage spectator sport. I now invite you to join me in being even more dismayed than they are, since however grim the implications may be for the future of smoking, the implications for driving make the future grimmer yet.

Because we don't need the CRC to tell us that the young are obsessed with motor racing; we catch the sharp end of that obsession every day, cut up at roundabouts, overtaken on inside motorway lanes, tailgated on winding country ones, forced to swerve for unsigned handbrake turns or to hit our own brakes at a green light because some spotty chancer has gunned through a red, and we know exactly why they drive that way. It is because they are playing at being Villeneuve or Hill or, God help us, Schumacher, they are not going round the North Circular they are going round Hockenheim, they are not negotiating the Hangar Lane gyratory, they are negotiating the Brands Hatch chicane, and more unsettling yet, an exponentially increasing proportion of them, as a glance at the dear statistics show, are doing it in race-tuned plunder they do not have to afford because they can afford a brick for the window and a pair of pliers for the ignition, and if the Old Bill gives chase, so much the better, since the Old Bill is really Old Damon, and, oh look, we have spun off at Druid's, and, oh look now, they are turning off our life-support.

Odd, I thought the Labour Party was obsessed with cars, too. I thought it was obsessed with cutting their numbers, their size, their power, their environmental and human destruction, I thought Tony's abiding aspiration was to see us all on clockwork buses or pushbikes, I cannot recall any pledges that motor racing and all that it encourages would be passionately supported. But I'm a pretty straight guy, I'll take another shufti at the manifesto, and if I'm wrong, I shall of course apologise.

JASPER GERARD

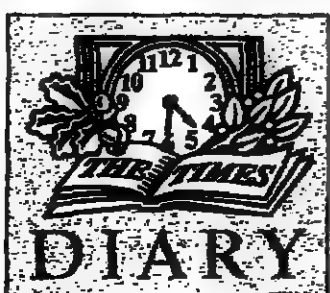
Film noir

DEAD actors are writing the unsavoury appetite of Madonna: the charade is to make a film about that much missed comic master, Peter Sellers. His surviving friends, including Lord Snowdon, are not happy. The flick will be based loosely on Roger Lewis's salacious 1994 biography, *The Life and Death of Peter Sellers*. It is an unhappy story. Worn out by drink and four unsavoury marriages to actresses Anne Howe, Britt Ekland, Miranda Quarry and Lynne Frederick, Sellers died after collapsing in the dowdy Dorchester Hotel in 1980, aged 55.

The film will be made by Madonna's company, Maverick

Productions. "I loved Peter but I will not be co-operating," Snowdon tells me. "His private life is not a suitable subject for a film." Madonna will not be short of parts. She could play Ekland, or one of Sellers's stable of lovers — Priscilla Presley, Mia Farrow, Liza Minelli.

If the director feels she is a little well, senior for such roles, she could portray Sellers's mother, with whom poverty forced him to share a bed until he was 16. "Madonna is very keen to meet Lewis," says a Tinseltown source. "Her producer lunched him at the Garrick. Madonna was so upset she couldn't make it." Perhaps a good reason for the Garrick staying men only.



ANN WIDDECOMBE's best piddown is about to enter common usage. Channel 4 will next month broadcast an episode of a new late-night current affairs programme *Something of the Night*, hosted by that master of self abuse Will Self. The title refers to the former Home Office Minister's devastating description of her former boss Michael Howard. Naturally, Miss Widdecombe will take part.

Smoked out

AS if smoking had not already seriously damaged the Government's health, a group of Labour MPs is attempting to ban the House of Commons's own brand of cigarettes. The twenty friends appear in a box stamped with Parliament's imprimatur. Nearly 4,000 packets

a year are sold from behind the bars at Westminster. However, their sale is now to be raised with the All-Party Smoking and Health Group. But is it just a smoke-screen?

De-briefed

DANGEROUS, cash shortages. The once mighty Millbank Tower has been forced to suspend the "daily brief" which provides soundbites to keep confused MPs on message. "We don't have



"50 years — and most of them in the past ten years"

enough people in the office because they are at by-elections," says one there. Labour MPs should make the most of this unexpected intellectual freedom. It will not last. The daily brief will be resumed as soon as possible. Occasional briefs will be communicated as appropriate, waffles a Millbank memo.

FAME descended, briefly, upon Michael White, The Guardian's mischievous political editor, when he entered a young Labour bash sporting the name tag of Benjamin Weeg-Prosser. Peter Mandelson's influential assistant. "It was terrific," says White. "I met so many nice future Prime Ministers."

Not kosher

A NASTY spat is brewing between Maureen Lipman and the TV critic Victor Lewis-Smith over alleged anti-Semitism. The piggy in the middle is Vanessa Feltz, a minor — if well-proportioned — TV host. After three years of aiming such subtle abuse as "fat lardbucket" and "30 chins Feltz" at the hapless presenter, LS likened her to a "Yenta" (a dim but cunning woman). Ms Lipman is furious and has traded bitter letters. "Some of the words he used were unbelievable," she says.



TRADE is sullying yet another noble name: Rosina, daughter of Lord Cobbold, above, is setting up a furniture firm in the garden of her parents' stately, Knebworth House, Herts. Rosina Lytton Ltd will manufacture coffee-tables, big chairs — the normal country bungalow stuff. This is not the first time the Lytton Cobbolds have put their house to commercial use. Last year, to help pay restoration costs, they opened up to the rock group Oasis and 250,000 paying guests. "I'm using one of my father's buildings as a workshop," says Rosina, 25, who will design the furniture herself. "I've renovated it in return for the first five years' rent." To that other chippy, David Linley, beware.



X-rated idea: Madonna, and Sellers with Britt Ekland



WHY ARE WE WAITING?

The Government must show radicalism now on the NHS

Frank Dobson is the St Augustine of this Government — he will keep Labour's promises on the National Health Service, but not yet. The Health Secretary's pledge to make waiting lists shorter is now, itself, on a waiting list, to be tackled in due course. The Department of Health has adopted a flexible approach to election commitments over the past few weeks but Mr Dobson's inability to deliver an early reduction in the numbers waiting for treatment is primarily a consequence of problems he inherited rather than created. It should be noted, however, that the decision to abolish tax relief for private health insurance taken out by the elderly has hardly reduced the demand for NHS beds. Given the pressures which Labour politicians knew the NHS faced, they may have been raising expectations too high with their campaign rhetoric but ministers have tried to be as good as the manifesto's word.

The Government may not have increased spending on the NHS by the 3 per cent health professionals demand, but expenditure has gone up by 1.9 per cent in real terms, 0.7 per cent more than the Conservatives had budgeted for. The appointment of Stephen Day to lead a Waiting List Action Team may strike the cynical as window-dressing, but the West Midlands director of the NHS has achieved striking success in reducing waiting lists in his region and the wider adoption of his proven good practice should help improve efficiency. Both the recent funding increase and any efficiency gains promoted by Mr Day will, however, only be palliative measures. The size of waiting lists is only one, albeit painful, symptom of a deeper problem with the health service which will require structural reform from the Government to correct.

An indication of how daring the Government might be will come with the publication of a White Paper on the future of the NHS, expected before Christmas. The

minister responsible for the White Paper, Alan Milburn, is an imaginative moderniser committed to improving the delivery of patient care by learning appropriate lessons from service providers in the private sector. There is, however, a paradox inherent in adopting all the lessons that the private sector can teach except for the competition and choice which makes it so creative a tutor. The Government are in danger of cherry-picking rather than planting their own orchard.

Fundamental reform of the NHS will not be easy. With traditional Labour sensibilities already offended by the treatment of teachers and the prospect of welfare reform, radical change to the health service would require political courage. It cannot, however, be avoided. The NHS has been permanently on the verge of crisis since the mid-eighties and various internal efficiency improvements have not addressed the fundamental problems faced by the service. Even if the Government were prepared to countenance significant tax rises to try to meet the spiralling demand for health care they would be beyond anything the public could be expected to bear. Imposing new charges, especially for GP consultations, would only discourage early treatment and pile up problems for the future.

If ministers want to avoid an annual wrestle with the Treasury to keep waiting lists at an endurable level then they should start considering a move to some form of social, or stakeholder, insurance system which borrows the best from continental and US public sector practice and allows competition to level down costs. The Minister for Welfare Reform, Frank Field, yesterday outlined a vision of government-supervised insurance for the costs of care which could revive the spirit of voluntarism. Frank Dobson could do worse than learn from Mr Field, who, if not a saint, is the closest the Government has to a prophet.

DIPLOMATS AND DICTATORS

Dialogue with Iraq should not dilute allied objectives

It was the day of the diplomats. Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, and Boris Yeltsin both held talks with Tariq Aziz, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, in Moscow. Meanwhile, Binayamin Netanyahu and King Hussein of Jordan met in Amman. Further activity is proposed for the foreign ministers of the five permanent members of the United Nations' Security Council in Geneva over the next few days. This implies a diplomatic solution is a distinct possibility.

This dialogue represents the quest for a deal under which Iraq would allow UN inspectors to re-enter its borders. The mediators have sought something to offer Saddam. It has been hinted that there might be an alteration in the inspection teams that would offset the disputed American element. The United States has indicated that, if she co-operates, Iraq might obtain a modest increase in the amount of money it is allowed to raise through oil sales to purchase food and medicines for its population. Alternatively, the range of available materials that could be bought under this scheme could be slightly extended.

Allied interest in such an arrangement is understandable. A military strike against Saddam would surely court widespread international condemnation. This would be especially true in the Middle East itself. Few countries, other than Britain and Israel, would support American action. President Clinton could not be certain that even an intense assault would ensure that Iraq relented. The prospect of prolonged strife is unwelcome in Washington. A "face-saving" formula would be exceptionally convenient.

There is, though, a thin line between allowing Iraq to retreat and the risk of outright appeasement. The danger is that the United States will end up in *de facto* negotiations with the Iraqi leader. At the

outset of this crisis the United Nations made it clear that the Security Council not Saddam Hussein would determine who carried out its inspections. This question was separate from the rules surrounding oil sales. That was and remains the right position on this issue. The Russians would link the two and, in Mr Primakov's words, show that there is "light at the end of the tunnel" on sanctions.

A bargain on these terms will be viewed as an important victory by Baghdad. Iraq will have eased its economic plight and obtained an invaluable three-week space in which to hide evidence of its biological and chemical arsenal. The United States and Britain will have lost their ability to shape allied strategy. The UN inspectors will have been rendered less effective. Saddam will foresee a time when sanctions are lifted despite his military ambitions. Furthermore, he will reach the conclusion that aggressive moves on his behalf are the best means of moving that moment closer. Conflict postponed at this point will lead to confrontation later.

The United States must entertain extreme caution before it makes such concessions. It is true that a showdown with Iraq would cause enormous diplomatic difficulties. However, if Mr Clinton thinks that he cannot strike Iraq at any time when the United States is unpopular in the Middle East then he might as well remove his armed forces entirely. The sole relevant criterion is whether Iraq is in compliance with its legal commitments. If it is, the end of sanctions will come automatically. If not, isolation and inspection should continue. The material declassified by the Foreign Office yesterday shows that Saddam can produce chemical and biological weapons very quickly. The US and Britain cannot dilute their original objectives. It will soon be clear if there is to be a day of the dictator.

ONCE MORE WITH PAPER BAG

Audience participation comes to the 1812 Overture

Drips of water can bore a hole in stone. So enough paper bags burst simultaneously could simulate the discharge of a cannon. On Sunday the audience at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, is being asked to test this proposition. Because of the expense of securing cannon for the performance of the 1812 Overture, each member of the audience is being given paper bags to burst at the appropriate downbeats of the baton.

Tchaikovsky, that tortured genius, might have disapproved of this resorting of his most popular work. But he hated its vulgar noisiness anyway. And the class of instruments that can be used to make music is open-ended, especially in the kitchen of the orchestra. The toy symphonies of the 18th century introduced warblers and tweeters. Gerald Hoffnung, the Heath Robinson of music, composed pieces for hoarsepipe and vacuum cleaner. Benjamin Britten scored *Let's make an Opera* for nursery sounds such as tinkling teacups.

Such novel instrumentation can create novel musical problems. Matteo Pargian's chamber music for cardboard box caused critical debate about which supermarket provided the most musical box. And audience participation takes control away from the maestro with the baton. John Cage's 4.33 was regarded by the composer as his most significant work. The performers

sit silently on the concert platform. The music is whatever noise comes from the audience and from outside the concert hall. The same composer's 0.00 is less problematic, since it can be performed by anyone in any way, and can be said not to exist.

This latest experiment with audience playing the music will be puffed with breathless interest. But audiences should probably be kept in their place — which is, of course, coughing and unwrapping toffees during the musical noises, and making their own loud noises at the end. To test the acoustics at the new Bayreuth theatre, local soldiers were brought in to squat on the floor. Wagner described them as his ideal audience. First, they were all in their places before the music began. Secondly, they did not talk or fidget while it was being played. And thirdly, when it was over, they made no pretence of having understood anything of what they had seen or heard and so sensibly refrained from airing their opinions about it.

After the paper bags, the next performance of the 1812 Overture at the Bridgewater Hall comes on December 2. The performers will be the combined bands of the Royal Marines, the Hungarian National Guard, and the Royal Swedish Navy. At least they should have the equipment to revert to Tchaikovsky's original score, without counting on the audience for their pops.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Political propriety put in proportion

From Mr Patrick Howarth

Sir, Shall we ever come to our collective senses on the subjects of sleaze and adultery in public life? The record of the last half-century is not encouraging.

Once upon a time there was a minor common named Sidney Stanley, who persuaded a decent but unsophisticated junior minister to accept some small gifts, a transaction from which Stanley derived no perceptible benefits. The reports of the inquiry which followed filled the pages of the popular press for days, and the Atlee Government never recovered its reputation for moral integrity.

Later, Harold Macmillan's able minister, John Profumo, with a beautiful and talented wife to whom he was clearly devoted, chose not to admit to a passing affair with a girl named Christine Keeler. The Government fell in consequence.

More recently one or two Conservative MPs decided to augment their incomes by asking questions of minimal interest to the nation at large. The outcome of this was that the Conservative defeat at the next election was transformed into a rout.

Now we are back on track with tobacco advertising and motor racing. Clearly standards in public life must be maintained, and in this country they are, happily, exceptionally high. But, as we are unlikely to have a government whose members are all *rectores eumachi* with *inexpensive* tastes, there will continue to be lapses. Can we not attach proper proportions to them?

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK HOWARTH,
Flat 2, Pencarrow,
The Avenue, Sherborne, Dorset.
November 17.

Legal aid for infants and mentally ill

From Miss Jean H. Ritchie, QC

Sir, In his interview with Frances Gibb (November 7) the Lord Chancellor states that in medical negligence cases where a child has been brain damaged a claim should only be brought if the case has a 75 per cent chance of success — and then on a "no win, no fee" basis. In this way, he claims, parents will avoid the "agony" of litigation.

As a practitioner in the field of medical negligence I consider such a view to be seriously flawed. Brain damage causes cerebral palsy in the form of physical handicap and sometimes mental handicap too. The severity of the cerebral palsy varies between the very mild and the extremely serious, where the child cannot move, cannot speak and remains a baby trapped in a growing body.

The medical profession's view is that only 10 per cent of cerebral palsy cases are caused by doctors' negligence. Expert investigation is therefore essential in every case, frequently requiring reports from consultants in obstetrics, paediatrics, paediatric neurology and neurosurgery.

Under the Lord Chancellor's proposals a child, however badly damaged, will no longer have a right to legal aid for that investigation to be carried out. A solicitor and a barrister will have to do a considerable amount of work for no fee at all before they can even assess the chances of success: they will also have to pay the fees of the experts consulted. How many cases, in commercial reality, will then be investigated, let alone taken to court?

The Lord Chancellor's proposals will mean that many, if not most, de-

serving cases will not be pursued. Is that really what a compassionate society wants? I cannot believe that a Labour Government will lend itself to these proposals.

Yours faithfully,
JEAN H. RITCHIE,
4 Paper Buildings, Temple, E.C.4.
November 10.

From Dr Maurice Lipsedge and Ms Magi Young

Sir, We are dismayed by the Government's proposals to withdraw legal aid from people who have been assaulted or falsely imprisoned by the police or who have received negligent or abusive treatment from our psychiatric services.

The victims of these wrongs are usually the most vulnerable in our society. They can rarely afford to pay for legal advice. They could not afford the premiums for the legal insurance necessary for conditional-fee agreements. Indeed, of the very few insurance policies available, one specifically excludes cases involving psychiatric treatment.

We urge the Government to be aware of the serious civil liberties implications of denying access to justice to these groups. If the reforms proceed we will return to a society in which those who abuse their power or who exercise it incompetently will be unaccountable for their actions.

Yours faithfully,
MAURICE LIPSEGE
(Consultant psychiatrist),
MAGI YOUNG (solicitor),
Parlett Kent, Portland House,
Longbrook Street, Exeter, Devon.
November 11.

Museums as 'perk' for middle classes

From Mr A. M. T. Maxwell-Irving

Sir, There is evidence to be found in Italy to contradict Magnus Linklater's view (November 13) of the deterrent effect of museum charges there. In Florence, where the Uffizi, the Pitti Palace and the Accademia all make a charge of 12,000 lire (about £4.50), there are nearly always long queues at the ticket offices: that at the Uffizi commonly extends for a quarter of mile or more along the banks of the Arno.

The annual takings from these three museums alone has been estimated to exceed £10 million a year, which goes a long way towards administering and conserving their priceless treasures. If the collections are worth seeing, the public will always pay.

Yours faithfully,
A. M. T. MAXWELL-IRVING,
Telford House,
Blairlogie, Stirling.
November 13.

From the Chairman of the Association of Independent Museums

Sir, The Department of Culture's apparent U-turn on admission charges (report, "Free museums 'are perk for middle classes'" November 12) was predictable, and is welcome. There is no such thing as a free museum — not even in the unlikely event that museum directors and curators were to offer their services in full as volunteers.

In whatever concessionary or rigorous form admission charges may be applied, they do generate a valuable contribution to museum operating costs. Even more important, they increase visitor expectations and usefully sharpen the collective museum view of its public-service purpose.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN BRYANT,
Chairman, Association of Independent Museums,
Mill Meadows,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.
November 12.

From Dr Michael Rasburn

Sir, What Orwellian logic, to claim that one has to charge for museum entry so that the poor (via taxes) do not subsidise the rich. The only problem is that some of those taxes already go to assist the museums.

Actually, if the museums were to charge enough they could keep out the nasty middle classes as well, leaving the field of appreciation back where it belongs (perhaps they might argue) with the seriously wealthy. A bit like grand opera!

Yours,
M. RASBURN,
Pleasant Villa,
Heapham, Lincolnshire.
November 14.

From Mr Kevin McGrath

Sir, Surely if museums were to become more like Marks & Spencer and Harvey Nichols, as the Arts Minister is reported as suggesting, the first thing they would do would be to abolish admission charges.

As for the implication that there is something inappropriate about people using museums as rendezvous points, how does this differ from the way they use shops, parks, railway stations and public places generally? They have even been known to go to Trafalgar Square without having, as their primary purpose, to share at Nelson's column.

Yours truly,
KEVIN MCGRATH,
122 Herons Wood, Harlow, Essex.
November 13.

Choc horror

From Mr Leslie Gilmore

Sir, Sir Hans Sloane may have concocted milk chocolate and played a major role in founding the British Museum (letter, November 13) but, Sir, an Englishman he was not. Like so many of those who made innumerable contributions to every facet of British life, Sir Hans was an Ulster-Scot, born in Killyleagh, Co Down.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE GILMORE,
71 Kirkliston Park, Belfast.
November 18.

One of those jobs

From Mrs J. A. Temple

Sir, Let us hope that Mr Ernie Preston (letter, November 13) has had the good sense to store his blackout blinds — certain insurance against ever requiring them again.

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER TEMPLE,
Winwick Manor,
Winwick, Northampton.
November 13.

From Mr Peter Wynne Davies

Sir, Taking down blackout blinds may be embarrassing enough; but developing wedding pictures after the subsequent divorce, as I once did, is perhaps even more so.

Yours etc,
PETER WYNNE DAVIES,
93 Bedford Road, N2,
peterwd@btinternet.com
November 17.

Berlin and Goldsmith

From Mr Frank Giles

Sir, My old friend and colleague William Rees-Mogg has attempted to compare the late Sir Isaiah Berlin with the late Sir James Goldsmith ("Two men with their hearts in history", November 17).

There is obviously room in all societies for men of reflection and men of action. But to discuss in the same breath these two men reveals a serious defective sense of proportion. Comparisons, according to Shakespeare, are odorous. Though the dictionary defines this as sweet-smelling, I find this one just the opposite.

Yours truly,
FRANK GILES,
42 Blomfield Road, W9.
November 18.

From Mr Richard Ingrams

Sir, Used as I am to Lord Rees-Mogg's eccentric views, I cannot allow his equation of Sir Isaiah Berlin with Sir James Goldsmith to go unchallenged.

Toxic pesticides

From Dr Peter Brand, MP for the Isle of Wight (Liberal Democrat)

Sir, The findings by Dr Robert Davies on the use of toxic pesticides during the Gulf War (report, November 17) will be welcomed by the many in this country who believe they are victims of illness caused by exposure to organophosphates or other pesticides.

In a 1995 study by the Institute of Occupational Health, "significant differences" between workers exposed to organophosphate sheep-dip and control workers were apparent on three neuropsychological tests. This new study adds to a growing body of research which suggests that organophosphate exposure can cause psychiatric and physiological illness.

I believe that the Government should make accidental exposure to pesticides a notifiable event. In this way a complete collection of evidence for this distressing set of conditions can be built up.

Yours faithfully,
PETER BRAND,
House of Commons.
November 17.

From Mr Llew Smith, MP for Blaenau Gwent (Labour)

Sir, I am concerned that the ultimate responsibility for the failure of the MoD to release information on the use

of organophosphate pesticides during the Gulf War seems to be being shifted on to departmental civil servants, away from former ministers (report, October 29).

On March 4 this year, Nicholas Soames, the then Armed Forces Minister, declined my request for the publication in the then forthcoming official report of corrections to each of the five inaccurate replies on the subject given in Parliament over the previous three years.

The latest statement, and the release to Parliament of further information by John Reid, Mr Soames's successor, suggest that I was right to persist in my request.

At the end of the defence debate on February 1, 1996, Mr Soames chose gratuitously to describe me as "completely barking" rather than address the serious points I had raised. Time has shown that I was indeed barking — up the right tree.

Rather than let civil servants carry the can, the present Government should ensure that the errors of past Conservative ministers are made plain.

A deserved outcome of this sad saga would be if Gulf War veterans are now properly compensated for their illnesses.

Yours sincerely,
LLEW SMITH,
House of Commons.
November 17.

Old wine, new bottles

From Mr Dave Jarvie

Sir, Thank you for Robin Young and Jane MacQuitty's splendid Naïf Wine Guide, "Brands that fail the taste test" (November 15).

How lovely to remember the wines that we loved so dearly in our youth. Just getting familiar with them was the first rung on the learning curve.

I recently tried to express to a local wine appreciation class how necessary it was then to impress the opposite sex with the ability to order wine confidently in a restaurant and how, no matter what wine was ordered, invariably it came up tasting "chemical", "oxidised", "acidic", "sulphury" and "gross" — in fact, very much as MacQuitty and Young recorded.

It's good to see that some things don't change.

Yours faithfully,
DAVE JARVIE,
(Founder, DJ's Wine Club),
35 Woodland Way,
Woodford Green, Essex.
November 17.

Students' benefits

From Mrs Anne Ruff

Sir, Students on a full-time course at the Inns of Court School of Law who are exploiting a loophole in benefits regulations should perhaps be congratulated, as future barristers, for highlighting the present ambiguity of what is a "full-time course" (report, October 30; letter, November 8).

There is no general definition of a "full-time course" in the social security regulations; each case is considered on its merits. In my experience, universities do not expect full-time students to attend classes for more than nine hours a week.

The Government's proposals to reduce public funding to higher education students may well encourage more students to look to the social security system as an alternative source of finance.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE RUFF,
(Principal Lecturer in Law),
Middlesex University,
The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4,
a.ruff@mdx.ac.uk

Business letters, page 31

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 19 1997

Troubleshooter takes over top job

Laura Ashley directors oust Iverson

By Jason Nisbet



Thornhill: public support

THE 30-month reign of Ann Iverson as chief executive of Laura Ashley came to an abrupt end yesterday when she and James Walsh, the finance director, were ousted from the troubled clothes and furnishings seller.

Ms Iverson left the company immediately after being told on Monday night that she was being replaced as chief executive by David Hoare, the management consultant brought in to sort out the company's critical cash flow and stock supply problems.

"Ann understands the decision and knows this is part of the recovery plan," said Stephen Cox, the group's company secretary, yesterday. "The situation as it stood was simply not acceptable."

After picking up more than £2.2 million in salary and bonus payments since she became chief executive in June 1995, Ms Iverson will receive £450,000 compensation for loss of office.

Mr Walsh, who will stay until a replacement is found, is entitled to a £300,000 pay off.

These will be paid despite Laura Ashley's critical financial problems, which have seen it plunge into losses, breach the covenants on its £50 million of loans and enter discussions with its bankers, led by HSBC Holdings and Bank of Nova Scotia. The retailer's shares fell to 45p yesterday, having lost nearly four fifths of their value in a year and fallen 20 per cent since Sir Bernard Ashley, husband of the founder, purchased 100,000 extra shares last month. He now controls 35.2 per cent of the shares.

The end for Ms Iverson came after two weeks of intensive meetings as Mr Hoare, who was brought in as chief operating officer in September, started implementing his plans to return the retailer to profitability.

The board's decision to get rid of Ms Iverson is believed to have been unanimous. However, it is understood that John Thornton, the merchant banker who chairs the company, had been discussing the ousting of Ms Iverson with other directors before Monday's meeting. This was despite Mr Thornton's public support of Ms Iverson at the annual shareholders' meeting in August.

Mr Thornton was behind

the appointment of Mr Hoare's consultancy company, Tallisman Management, in the summer. Mr Thornton is understood to have asked a colleague whether the City considered the mess at Laura Ashley to be his fault. The answer was: "Not yet, but if you do not do something soon it will be."

Since Tallisman came in a catalogue of problems have emerged. These include failing to deliver popular lines to stores, supplying too much of slow selling products, inability to identify how much money is being made on many items and failing to keep track of the cash position.

However, the main source of problems identified by Tallisman was the US, where Ms Iverson had embarked on an ambitious expansion plan. This has been stopped in its tracks. Laura Ashley has surrendered the leases on its new stores and is exploring whether it can sell the business.

Mr Hoare has decided to stop other initiatives, which include new ranges of home furnishings and clothing for next year. He is also trying to reduce the influence of the Ashley family on the company and is understood to have said he may quit if Sir Bernard, who is a non-executive director, interferes in day-to-day decision-making. City analysts said Mr Hoare is "a turnaround man" and is unlikely to stay at the helm long term.

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Ann Iverson will leave Laura Ashley with £450,000 compensation for loss of office

Beckett blocks £365m disposal by Sears

By Chris Ayres

MARGARET BECKETT, the President of the Board of Trade, yesterday dealt a severe blow to Sears, by blocking the troubled retailer's £365 million sale of its Freemans mail order business to Littlewoods.

Sears immediately said it would seek grounds for a judicial review of Mrs Beckett's decision. The move sent its shares down 3 1/2p to 54 1/2p.

The sale — which was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in April — was blocked on the grounds that it would give Littlewoods and Great Universal Stores, its main rival, more than 80 per cent of the agency mail order market.

Sears had agreed to sell the business for £365 million as part of its restructuring plan. The strategy, which aims to return cash to shareholders and includes selling its shoe business and demerging its Selfridges department store, will now have to be reviewed.

Sir Bob Reid, chairman of Sears, said: "We will retain Freemans and focus on continuing to improve its performance with the intention of demerging it within two years."

Ian Cheshire, commercial director of Sears, would not rule out the possibility of a sale. However, N Brown, a previous bidder, said it would not raise its offer price, believed to have been less than £335 million.

The decision also came as a blow to Littlewoods, which had planned to use Freemans to boost its market share to about 25 per cent. But yesterday it attempted to shrug off the setback.

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET		
FTSE 100	4882.4	(-21.8)
Yield	3.3%	
FTSE All share	2250.99	(-8.44)
Nikkei	16726.57	(+44.25)
Dow Jones	7880.78	(-17.44)
S&P Composite	941.81	(-4.39)

US YIELD		
Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	100 1/8%	(100 1/8%)
Short Bond	6 7/8%	(6 7/8%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	7 1/8%	(7 1/8%)
Life long gilt	117 1/2%	(117 1/2%)
Rate (Dec)	117 1/2%	(117 1/2%)

STOCKS		
New York	1,888 1/2	(1,888 1/2)
London	1,884 1/2	(1,884 1/2)
DM	2,822 1/2	(2,822 1/2)
FF	9,787 1/2	(9,787 1/2)
Yen	2,372 1/2	(2,372 1/2)
Yen	212 1/2	(212 1/2)
\$ Index	102.8	(104.1)

CURRENCY		
London	1,725 1/2	(1,725 1/2)
DM	5,776 1/2	(5,776 1/2)
FF	165 1/2	(165 1/2)
Yen	125 1/2	(125 1/2)
\$ Index	102.7	(105.4)

TOKYO CLOSING		
Tokyo close	125.84	

COMMODITIES		
Brent 15-day (Feb)	\$19.80	(\$19.82)
Oil	\$19.80	

LONDON CLOSING		
London close	\$305.56	(\$305.56)

Calling
Vodafone, Britain's largest mobile telephone group, stepped up the price war with its rivals by cutting charges and increasing the amount of free calls offered to its customers.

Dairy battle
Northern Foods is determined to defend its share of the market in supplying milk to the main supermarket chains despite making little money from the business.

Borrowing target to be revised down by Brown

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

GORDON BROWN is set to revise downwards the Government's borrowing target in next week's Pre-Budget Report after the latest figures showed the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) is on course to undershoot Treasury forecasts.

The Treasury was able to make a net debt repayment of £5.7 billion in October, while the September PSBR was also revised downwards by £200 million to £2.9 billion.

In the first seven months of this financial year, government borrowing totalled £2.6 billion, compared with £12.2 billion at the same time last year. Economists said the Government is likely to undershoot its current forecast target of £10.9 billion by around £3 billion and will consequently revise its own forecast next month.

The improvement in the PSBR has been led by tight controls on government spending.

Botnar tax decision due today

By Jason Nisbet

THE Inland Revenue will learn today whether it has won £100 million in back taxes from charitable trusts controlled by Octav Botnar, the fugitive former Nissan UK chief.

The High Court ruling comes two weeks after the Revenue dropped its four-year prosecution of Mr Botnar for tax fraud, claiming the 84-year-old tycoon, who lives in Switzerland, was too ill to stand trial.

However, the Revenue is still pursuing Mr Botnar's charitable trusts for £68 million of tax plus interest of more than £30 million, claiming tax was payable because Mr Botnar could potentially have benefited from the trusts. Mr Botnar won the case before the Revenue's Special Commissioners last year, but the Revenue appealed to the High Court on a legal technicality. Mr Botnar has vowed to go to the Court of Appeal if he loses today.

Liddell threat to put mis-sellers out of business

By Caroline Merrell, Gavin Lumsden and Susan Emmett

THE Government threatened yesterday to sack senior life insurance executives and put their companies out of business if they fail to resolve the pensions mis-selling scandal.

In her strongest action so far, Helen Liddell, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said: "I seriously envisage a situation where companies are imperilled. If they do not get a move on they are in danger of being put out of business."

She went on: "There is still a raft of companies that are walking away from this mess."

More than 40 companies, including some of the UK's biggest life insurance firms, have been struggling to compensate hundreds of thousands of people who were encouraged to give up their rights to company schemes in favour of taking out personal pensions. The total compensation bill is expected to be well above £4 billion. Ms Liddell is becoming increasingly impatient with the insurance companies' lack of progress. Much of the mis-selling occurred at the end of the Eighties.

Not content with fining and publicly reprimanding firms, Ms Liddell said yesterday: "I will continue to look for ways to maximise pressure on the industry."

She is particularly annoyed with companies that seem to be using the review process as an excuse to sell more policies.

The Economic Secretary added that one way the Personal Investment Authority (PIA) could take action against senior executives is to exclude them from the list of registered individuals, which it is planning to introduce next year.

The named individuals will then not be able to work in the industry without the necessary authorisation.

Post Office seals Co-op Bank deal

By Richard Miles, Banking Correspondent

A LANDMARK agreement sealed yesterday by the Post Office and the Co-operative Bank has created Britain's biggest network of banking outlets.

From next week, Co-op Bank customers will be able to cash cheques and deposit funds at any of the Post Office's 15,500 outlets in England and Wales. Similar plans for Scotland are under preparation.

The nationwide roll-out of the service comes after a 12-month trial at 1,500 post offices in northwest England,

North Wales and the Midlands. During the trial, the Co-op Bank logged an average of 25,000 transactions per month, two thirds of them deposits.

Stuart Sweetman, managing director of Post Office Counters, said that the agreement was non-exclusive and so would not interfere with a similar trial by Lloyds TSB, announced last month, or with the Post Office's relationship with Girobank, owned by Alliance & Leicester.

Mr Sweetman said that the Post Office would continue to extend its financial services by acting as a distributor for banks and insurers, following a "best-of-breed" approach to partnerships.

He said: "We don't believe we have reached the limits on our arrangements with financial institutions. There are discussions going on with other institutions of varying sizes."

The Post Office will receive a fee for each transaction carried out on behalf of the Co-op Bank. Boosting the current range of 171 services would enable the Post Office to save from closure many smaller outlets in which the postmaster is rewarded according to transaction levels, Mr Sweetman said.

Initially, only the one million customers holding a current account at the Co-op Bank will be permitted to use the service. However, Mervyn Pedley, the

bank's chief executive, did not rule out additional services. "From now on, we can offer our customers the biggest banking network in the UK," he said.

The deal vastly increases the Co-op Bank's scope to deal face to face with its customers, as 28 million people visit a post office each week. At present, the bank has fewer than 150 standalone branches, plus 200 banking points in Co-op stores and access to 14,000 Link automatic teller machines.

Barclays Bank staff are to stage a one-day strike on Christmas Eve in a dispute about the introduction of a performance-related pay scheme that unions say will lead to a pay freeze.

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HOW DOES ARDBEG TASTE TO PETER IRVINE?



Peter Irvine is the author of Scotland the Best.

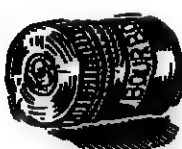
A lot of



(peat)

+

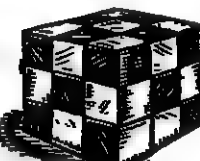
a suspicion of



(bourbon)

+

a degree of



(complexity)

+

a hint of



(smokiness)

+

with lashings of



(lily)

+



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Saviour proved to be false prophet

Jon Ashworth on how Ann Iverson failed to live up to expectations during her brief reign at Laura Ashley

BACK in the summer, Ann Iverson appeared in *Vogue* magazine wearing a black leather coat (and little else), and crooning: "All those City guys love to think of me in black leather, so I may as well live up to expectations."

This presumption, if true, is the only thing to have lived up to expectations concerning Ms Iverson, who has finally been shown the door at Laura Ashley after 28 months at the helm. Lauded for her success in turning round Bhs and Mothercare, Michigan-born Ms Iverson, 53, has singularly failed to impress, parting company with several top aides and presiding over three profit warnings this year alone.

Her reign will not be forgotten in a hurry. Ms Iverson was hailed as Laura Ashley's saviour when she swept back onto the British scene in July 1995. She

had returned to America a year earlier, after four successful years with Storehouse, but was tempted back with a performance-linked package worth more than £5 million over three years.

The eponymous Laura Ashley crafted her first prints on the kitchen table of her flat in Primrose, central London, in 1953, and built a fortune on floral cotton and chintz. She died in September 1985 after falling down an unlit stairwell at her daughter's cottage in the Cotswolds, where the family had gathered to celebrate her 60th birthday.

The company went ahead with its stock market flotation, coming to the

market in December 1985 in an issue that was 34 times oversubscribed. The shares soared to a 59p premium, touching 194p on the first day's trading. They closed at 45p yesterday, having slid steadily from a level of 207p last December.

Ms Iverson arrived in the UK in early 1990, fresh from Bloomingdale's in New York, and lived up to expectations. She revived fortunes at Bhs and then put the "fun" back into Mothercare, with innovations such as talking trees and singing clocks.

Her arrival at Laura Ashley was greeted with near hysteria in the City,

which saw in Ms Iverson a no-nonsense manager with a proven track record. But the months that followed brought successive setbacks, culminating in the loss of three female aides and a crumbling share price. Ms Iverson came to be painted as a workaholic control freak, quick to take umbrage when her decisions were questioned. There was also talk of a rift with Sir Bernard Ashley, who speaks for just over 35 per cent of the shares.

Today, Laura Ashley is again under new management, and Ms Iverson is facing an uncertain future. Like Liam Strong at Sears, she has discovered to her cost just how fickle a paramour the City can be. The prospect of a multimillion-pound pay-off should help to ease her embarrassment. It will certainly buy a few leather coats.

Vodafone tariff cuts likely to 'get the market going'

By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

VODAFONE fired the first salvo in a new price war in the mobile phones market, cutting some tariffs up to 15 per cent.

Chris Gent, chief executive, said that from January 1 customers would get five more minutes a month of free calls with no increase in the rental. At the same time peak-rate call charges will be cut 12.5 per cent and off-peak rates more than 15 per cent. The package of call charge reductions also includes a 20 per cent increase in free calls for small businesses and provision of international calls at up to 20 per cent cheaper than BT's rate card.

"This is a major revamp and it should get the market going," said Mr Gent who insisted that the price changes were aimed primarily at increasing mobile's present 14 per cent penetration of the UK population rather than the company's rivals — Cellnet, Orange and One2One.

Last night the rival operators played down any suggestion that Vodafone's action would trigger a mobile phone price war in the UK. Orange said Vodafone's tariff changes simply brought Vodafone's charges down towards their existing levels.

"We are delighted Vodafone is copying us," said one Orange executive. One2One said it was happy that its charges remained competitive.

Cellnet which has 37 per cent of the market to Vodafone's 39 per cent said: "We



Chris Gent insists that the price changes are aimed primarily at increasing the market penetration of mobile phones

believe our existing tariffs are extremely competitive already and we have no plans to change our tariffs.

Vodafone shares fell 15½p to 341½p yesterday. Orange fell 9p to 242p.

The pricing initiative came as Vodafone announced an 18 per cent rise in pre-tax profit to £297.5 million in the half year to September 30. Turnover rose 51 per cent to £1.16 billion — 32 per cent when the consolidated

tion of Vodafone's Greek business is excluded. Earnings per share rose 30 per cent to 6.64p before exceptional reorganisation costs and investment disposals. The interim dividend rises to 2.71p a share from 2.36p.

Vodafone's total customer base is now more than 4.6 million, taking account of minority stakes, and there was a record increase of 385,000 in the six months. Mr Gent said

yesterday that the new pricing plan would be revenue neutral if there was a 5 per cent increase in calls and a 5 per cent growth in subscribers. Even if that did not happen, Mr Gent said, "the payoff will come in later years".

Analysts are now looking for pre-tax profits of about £300 million for the full year. Vodafone also announced yesterday the appointment of two new non-executive direc-

tors from next year — Alan Broers, vice-chancellor of Cambridge University, and Sir David Scholey, senior adviser to SBC Warburg Dillon Read and a director of the Bank of England and a governor of the BBC.

They replace Sir William Barlow and Sir Robert Clark who both retire from the board at the end of March.

Times, page 30

C&W to create 1,000 customer service jobs

CABLE & Wireless Communications, the UK's largest cable company, will today announce more than 1,000 new jobs to improve service in the cable communications industry. The new jobs will come mainly in Glasgow (700) and Manchester (200), where a further 150 telesales staff will be taken on.

The aim is to set up new regional customer service call centres. The cable industry has been criticised for poor levels of customer service. CWC, a group put together from Mercury Communications, Bell Cablemedia, Videotron and Nynex Communications, is spending about £50 million this year on improving customer service.

Coal levy under fire

COAL industry campaigners seeking a levy on electricity bills to support the fuel were criticised by consumers yesterday. The Government was urged to ignore pleas for a levy to help coal, or for any other cause, such as energy efficiency. Yvonne Constance, head of the Electricity Consumers Committee, said: "Any coal levy, like all costs, hits lowest-income consumers hardest and we urge the Government to recognise this simple fact of life."

Brewer shows strength

MANSFIELD BREWERY, the regional brewer and pub operator, overcame tough trading conditions to lift interim pre-tax profits 9.3 per cent to £11.5 million. Its managed estate lifted sales 7.4 per cent to £41.7 million, while turnover from its tenanted estate fell 2.6 per cent to £9.6 million. Turnover from brewing and brands was up 18.2 per cent to £36.8 million. Earnings per share advanced to 12.80p (11.6p) and an interim dividend of 2.35p (2.1p) will be paid on December 18.

BG sells German assets

A CLEARANCE sale by BG of non-core businesses continued yesterday with the disposal of its German assets. The company sold all of its German business to Verbundnetz Gas of Leipzig in a deal that observers expect to exceed £80 million. BG, which runs Transco, the gas pipeline network, set out plans earlier this year to sell off peripheral interests. Over the past few weeks it has sold its interests in the Irish Sea and a pipeline detection business.

MGM sues rival studio

METRO-GOLDWYN-MEYER is suing Sony for \$150 million (£88 million) over the making of a rival James Bond film in an escalating row between the Hollywood studios. MGM lawyers have compiled a formidable legal arsenal in a Los Angeles court, including charges of copyright infringement, unfair competition, misappropriation of trade secrets and breach of contract. The row springs from disputed rights to the 1965 *Thunderball* film. Sony declined to comment. (Bloomberg)

Bank	Buy	Sell	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia	2.53	2.53	Malta	0.881	0.882
Belgium	27.15	18.80	Netherlands	2.465	2.465
Canada	0.350	0.350	New Zealand	2.26	2.26
Cyprus	0.001	0.001	Norway	12.62	1.15
Denmark	11.70	10.81	Portugal	310.53	285.53
France	10.58	9.48	Spain	257.70	255.35
Germany	3.08	2.84	Sweden	19.07	15.47
Greece	484	445	Switzerland	2.83	2.81
Hong Kong	13.21	12.71	Turkey	984.61	926.61
Ireland	1.21	1.01	USA	1.794	1.694
Israel	1.18	1.08			
Italy	6.35	6.70			
Japan	227.25	210.51			

Bank for small denomination bank notes supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

De La Rue shares rally after profit beats forecasts

By Adam Jones

SHARES in De La Rue, which lost their "go-go" status after banknote printing margins fell, rallied slightly yesterday after interim results exceeded the City's expectations.

De La Rue made profits of £56.3 million (£60.3 million) before tax in the six months to September 30.

The 1997 figures, however, would have been £64.9 million at constant exchange rates. De La Rue also absorbed a £1.7 million loss from the newly acquired Philips smartcard subsidiary. The shares closed at 410p, still adrift of their high of £10.52 in 1995 but up 12½p on the day.

The profits include a £7.8 million contribution from Camelot, the lottery operator, up £700,000 on the same period last year. Total turnover fell 0.9 per cent to £378.4 million.

Jeremy Marshall, chief executive, said the manufacture of cash-handling equipment for banks is becoming an increasingly large activity for De La Rue, contributing about 50 million profit, with development spend running at about £18 million a year now.

New products currently being tested by banks include cash recyclers, which allow tellers to feed money into the pool of cash that serves hole-in-the-wall machines, reduc-

ing the amount of working capital that sits idle in these automatic telling machines.

He would not say whether margins in banknote printing are stabilising after an overcapacity-fuelled fall, although he did say rivals face higher labour costs that could constrain further competition. The security paper and print division's margin was 18.6 per cent in the interim period, down from 21.2 per cent in the first half of 1996.

De La Rue received negligible banknote business from Eastern European countries in the latest interim period. An interim dividend of 7.5p (7.5p) will be paid on January 16.

Times, page 30



Marshall: quiet on margins

Camelot hits jackpot amid talk of rival

By Jon Ashworth

CAMELOT, the National Lottery operator, has turned to another bumper rise in profits, amid speculation that the Post Office may pitch for the lottery contract when it comes up for tender in 2001.

Camelot's pre-tax profits rose by 10.5 per cent, to £34.8 million, in the 24 weeks to September 13, in spite of a levelling in sales of Camelot Instant. Total sales climbed 17.2 per cent, to £2.45 billion, generating £696 million for good causes. A £20 million dividend is shared between the five Camelot shareholders — Cadbury Schweppes, De La Rue, GTEch, ICL and Rascal Electronics.

The Post Office is the largest single National Lottery retailer, selling both on-line tickets and Instant through its 19,000-plus outlets. It would face no restrictions in bidding for the lottery licence, which the Government would like to see in the hands of a non-profit operator. A Post Office spokesman said that it is constantly looking at new services and opportunities.

Camelot's sales were boosted by the mid-week lottery draw, begun in February. Profits after tax continued to represent just under 1 per cent of overall sales, at £23.9 million.

Four listed for loan book

By Richard Miles

FOUR foreign banks are among bidders shortlisted for the controversial sale of the Government's £1.6 billion student loan book.

The ten initial bidders have been whittled down to four, including Goldman Sachs, the US investment bank which has teamed up with Barclays, JP Morgan and UBS, the Swiss giant, in partnership with NatWest Markets.

The fourth bidder Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, the investment banking arm of Germany's biggest bank, has formed

a consortium with Sallie Mae, the largest purchaser of student loans in the US.

NM Rothschild, the adviser on the sale, said the successful bidder would pay the £1.6 billion face value of the loan book, but receive a Government subsidy to offset the shortfall between the interest rate paid on student loans and a commercial rate.

Charles Keay, director of NM Rothschild, said the four shortlisted groups would have to provide bids by January 16, based on what level of Gov-

ernment subsidy they thought appropriate. "The key to winning will be the ability to reduce this subsidy," he added, that the Government intended to put a further £1.5 billion of student loans up for sale in the next financial year.

Bidders must also decide whether they would want to administer the loan book, pass on its management to a third party, or leave it with the Student Loans Company. A Bill currently before Parliament will allow more rigorous collection methods.

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3Com

BOC expects early completion of Ohmeda

Taylor Nelson pays £137m for French rival

STOCK MARKET

FRASER NELSON

Dealers blame quiet day on new trading system

LIMITATIONS of the London Stock Exchange's new order book trading system were being blamed for another day of relatively quiet trading yesterday, as London prices eased back in spite of steady performance in global markets.

Dealers looking to spice up trading in FTSE 100 stocks said the City is taking its time to settle down to the computerised system. Even after a 3 per cent rise in Japan's Nikkei 225 index, dealers looking to shift larger baskets of stocks said large orders found few buyers.

Now that no contact with any other broker is needed for the largest stocks, many say their counterparts are left trying to second-guess the motives behind the orders. The result: scrappy selling, by normal City standards, which saw the FTSE 100 drop 21.6 points to 4,845.4.

One dealer said: "It's a difficult market to deal in now. We put up large deals, but there's nothing on the other side." "This means we end up either holding fire or buying and selling in small amounts."

The strongest FTSE 100 performer was Williams, whose shares rose 37p to 390p. The shares now stand just 3p away from a three-year high, but the rise was attributed to stock shortages caused by the technicians.

NatWest was the next best FTSE performer, up 12 1/2p to 883p on hopes that it may be about to announce news on its sale of NatWest Markets. The shares were still 13 pence off last month's high.

Enterprise Oil led the 20 FTSE fallers, dropping 43p to 609p on a warning that it is unlikely to produce more oil next year than this year. Traders said this stemmed from problems in finding enough drilling rigs. Such jitters went on to knock Cairn Energy down 6p to 491p and Lloyds down 5p to 275p.

The start to the results season was the main driving force behind the rest of the day's trading, with a total 671 million shares changing hands. Vodafone took centre stage, falling 15p to 341p after it launched a series of tariff reductions. Although it denied starting a price war, shares of Orange fell 9p to 242p, while Securicor softened 5p to 281p.

A similarly cool reception was given to British Steel, down 5p to 145p after its



Hubert Reid, left, and Ted Tuppen, chief executive, of Enterprise Inns, up 1p as average pub income rose

interim results. The shares now stand dangerously close to a three-year low, with the price threatened as the pound gains strength.

A 23 per cent rise in profits from Great Portland hoisted its shares 10p to 259p, after its best market expectations. Other strong results came from Perspecta, 37p stronger at £2.35, Chamberlain & Hill,

up 25p at 195p and Marshall's, up 8 1/2p at 141 1/2p. Enterprise Inns, headed by Hubert Reid, chairman, firmed 1p to 261 1/2p after lifting its average run income by 9 per cent to return full results in line with expectations.

The recent climb in the shares of Northern Foods ended 7p to 260 1/2p in response to

its financial results. It had climbed from 230p in the space of three weeks.

Safeway found itself on the FTSE sell list, down 7p at 394p on fears of weak results today. Rival Tesco gained 6p to 490p on hopes that it may have picked up whatever Safeway may have lost.

Concerns over today's trading statement from Glaxo Wellcome saw its shares shed 11p to 124p. Meyer International, up 3p at 376p, is expected to report better news with today's interim results.

News that Allianz, the German insurer, has made a bid for AGF of France sent ripples through the shares of insurers. It transpires that City dealers had fancied Allianz bidding for a large British insurer. General Accident fell 2 1/2p to 981 1/2p and Commercial Union eased 7p to 765p.

Few other takeover rumours surfaced during the day, leaving dealers to speculate over which upgrades the analysts may be pushing. James Capel was said to have gone easy on Lloyds, up 3 1/2p at 91 1/2p, remaining positive on the company although downgrading recommendation.

Arriva, the company formerly known as Cowie Group, added 10p to 365p after Penruddock Gordon said its true value was at least 420p.

On the Alternative Investment Market, IOC International added 6p to 162 1/2p on talk that Merrill Lynch is preparing a buy note on the telecom equipment maker. Electronic Retail Systems fell 15p to 380p after returning sharply increased losses, but dealers say the fall is overdue and ignores the company's recent acquisition, where it has all but cornered the market in electronic supermarket shelf-taps. Panic selling of Reflect shares fell 8 1/2p to a new low of 55p.

GILT-EDGED: Trading warmed up slightly in the futures pit, with some selling at the long end taking the Life Futures down ten notches at £117 1/2. Treasury 7 per cent 2002 eased 5 1/2p at £100 3/4. Treasury 3 per cent 2007 dropped 3 1/2p to 166 1/2. NEW YORK: Shares were little changed in quiet early trading as the market took a breather from Monday's sharp gains. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 17,441 points lower at 7,680.78.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7680.78 (-17.44)
S&P Composite 941.81 (-4.39)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 10726.57 (+443.25)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 10295.18 (-174.57)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 880.01 (-2.98)

Sydney:
ASX 2468.13 (-19.48)

Frankfurt:
DAX 3833.47 (+38.88)

Singapore:
Straits 1689.01 (+4.94)

Brussels:
General 1358.60 (+6.14)

Paris:
CAC-40 2782.61 (+6.62)

Zurich:
SIX 1155.20 (+0.30)

London:
FTSE 100 4845.4 (-21.6)
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FTSE 350 2240.7 (-4.7)
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US and Europe play power games

The vultures are circling over Asia. Recent days have seen an intensification of diplomatic in the region, ostensibly as the international community attempts to put together a rescue package for Asia's battered financial systems. But the to-ing and fro-ing are not entirely altruistic.

Michel Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, has been on a grand tour. Larry Summers, US Deputy Treasury Secretary, was in Tokyo on Monday en route to Manila for this week's meeting of officials from Asia, the IMF and the US to discuss an Asian economic emergency fund.

It is a mark of the perceived strategic importance of who signs the cheques for any financial bailout of Asia that it has been reported that European countries including Italy, France, Germany and Britain have said that they want representatives to attend.

The question of who rescues Asia is at

the heart of a developing geo-political power game to influence the region in future. America has long wanted to extend its reach, particularly now it is no longer engaged in fighting the Cold War. But Europe wants a piece of the action too. It did not go unnoticed in Washington that the first meeting of a new Asian-European grouping of finance ministers — ASEM — took place in Bangkok just before the annual meeting of the IMF in Hong Kong.

Japan has always attracted naked interventionism in economic matters from Washington, which has invariably used any monthly surge in Japan's bilateral trade surplus as an excuse to tell Tokyo how to run its economic affairs. Now Japan — once the region's economic leader, but now eclipsed,

along with its satellites — is threatened by financial implosion. It is caution waiting to be picked over.

The focus of the battle of influence now raging between America and Europe is the proposal, first mooted in Hong Kong, of a Japan-led Asian bailout fund. Both America and Europe have fiercely opposed the idea, arguing strongly that the IMF ought to lead any financial rescue. The reason for this is obvious. America and the large European economies are the dominant shareholders in the IMF and can, therefore, exert influence indirectly. This is preferable to any direct intervention. Japan's power may be hopelessly



JANET BUSH

blunted by its present plight, but it still has its pride.

It looks like Japan will capitulate to intense pressure and that the Asian fund will be quickly dropped or downgraded. The IMF and its powerful shareholders will determine the nature of Asia's recuperation.

Asia is not, however, the only object of interest. The tussle between America and Europe goes far deeper than this; it goes to the very heart of which will dominate the world financial system in the future. In public, at least, the US has been positive about the advent of the single currency. The State Department argues rather quaintly that dealing with one

economic policy will be so much simpler than dealing with several. But the US Treasury is privately concerned about European pretensions, most openly articulated by France, for the euro to displace the dollar as the world's reserve currency, or, at the very least, give it a run for its money.

Most economists still regard French hopes for the euro as vainglorious in the extreme, so dominant is the dollar in international trade. But, the very fact that Europe is starting to assert itself as a bloc begins to change the dynamics of the world financial system. Speculation has been circulating that continental European banks co-ordinated selling of Asian stocks and currencies for the specific purpose of causing a little bit of helpful deflation and so ensuring that

the euro is launched against a low inflation background with the low interest rates that Hans Tietmeyer, President of the Bundesbank, promised last Friday. This rumour may be nothing more than the most fanciful of conspiracy theories. But it may not.

One fascinating possibility is that China may step into the global power game, filling the perceived vacuum left by Japan, but it remains to be seen whether Beijing will be left sufficiently unscathed by the region's problems that it has the confidence to play this new role. As for Britain, outside the single currency for now, the best that Tony Blair can do is to play at both ends of the field. By constructing a bridge between the US and Europe, as Stephen Lewis, of Monument Derivatives, puts it, Britain can preserve London's status as a financial centre that is "the place where the dollar and the euro financial systems have their interface". It may prove the best place to be.

'Vacuous verbiage' unlikely to help EU jobless back to work

Philip Bassett
casts doubt on whether the Luxembourg summit will achieve results

Top ministers from all over Europe fly in to Luxembourg tomorrow for a high-level conference on employment — the European Union jobs summit. The aim is to find the route to cutting European unemployment levels, but the risk is that there will be much talk and little resultant action.

"What a goddam bore," was the verdict of Robert Reich, the former US Labour Secretary, on the G7 jobs summit in Lille last year, the precursor of this week's gathering. "Like all such international conferences, it's been scripted in advance by staffers who have eliminated anything remotely controversial," Mr Reich writes, in *Locked in the Cabinet*, his account of serving in President Clinton's Administration. "Endless streams of vacuous verbiage are translated simultaneously into seven languages."

On Friday Tony Blair will lead Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, and Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, in promoting the UK model for reducing the EU total of 18 million unemployed and bringing employment up to US levels. Mr Reich puts in graphic terms the argument between the US model of employment, with a highly flexible labour market, and the European model of labour market regulation. "In Europe," he says, "the 'Save-the-Jobs' party is dominant in the United States, the 'Let-Em-Drowners' have the upper hand now. But the result is similar: the bottom half are still trapped."

Trying to release the unemployed from that trap is what the jobs summit will be about, though cynics suggest it will have little, if any, impact on Europe's joblessness. Brussels wants to see the summit take strides towards bridging the job gap between the US and Europe. Padraig Elynn, the EU Social Affairs Commissioner, says: "Our shared task is to ensure that the EU does not remain the zone of high unemployment it has been for much of the last decade."

America has an employment rate — the proportion of people in work — of 74 per cent, with



Tony Blair backs the flexibility that has led to millions of new jobs in America through the likes of Bill Gates's Microsoft

Japan's about the same. Not only is the EU's employment rate a great deal lower, at 60.4 per cent, but the gap has widened over the past 20 years, as Japan and especially the US have created jobs, while they have disappeared in Europe. Reasons for the job gap are mainly structural. A third of the gap relates to young people: in the US almost three fifths of those aged 15-24 have jobs, compared with less than 40 per cent in the EU, largely because of the higher participation of young people in education and initial training in Europe.

At the same time, more older people work in the US — 55 per cent of 55 to 64-year-olds, against 35 per cent in the EU, also accounting for a third of the gap. And the final third is women: Europe has a far lower proportion of women aged 25-54 in work than the US — 61 per cent against 72 per cent — mainly because of social, religious and cultural differences, particularly in southern European countries and Ireland.

To try to bridge this gap, the European Commission is pro-

posing ambitious employment targets. It wants Europe to lift its employment rate to 65 per cent in five years, with a long-term goal of 70 per cent. Mr Flynn says that "the time has come to set targets and quantify our employment goals".

But mindful of the failure of previous targets, it is now expected that most EU member states will reject precise targets as irrelevant and unrealistic. The Commission's annual Em-

ployability report has been stalling. Figures calculated by *The Times* from US Department of Labour data show that since 1979 the number of non-farm jobs — the main US measure of employment — has risen 35 per cent, or 32 million. Since 1992, when President Clinton was first elected, the number of jobs has risen 12 per cent, or 13.3 million.

In some sectors, the growth has been even more startling.

'Like all such conferences, it's been scripted in advance'

employment in Europe report admits that the EU's performance in creating jobs over the past six years has been "markedly inferior" to that of the US and Japan, with modest growth of 600,000 new jobs in 1996 "not enough to make significant inroads into making good the job losses of the recession".

Greater labour market flexibility is the prescription that Mr Blair will give the summit.

In electronic components, for instance, total employment has risen 18 per cent since 1992, with 95,000 new jobs. In computer and data processing, with the rise of companies like Microsoft and Intel, it has risen 60 per cent, with almost half a million new jobs.

This year, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, US employment will rise over-

all by a further 2.3 per cent, and Japan's by 1.2 per cent. In contrast, employment across the whole of the EU is forecast to rise by only 0.4 per cent — much of that buoyed up by a projected increase in the UK of 1.3 per cent, at a time when French employment is projected to rise by only 0.2 per cent, and employment in post-unification Germany still falling, by 0.4 per cent.

But Britain's solution of greater labour market flexibility, combined with minimum labour standards, still provokes opposition in Europe. But there are signs that it is winning support. The Commission is finally acknowledging, grudgingly, that "flexibility and security need not be mutually exclusive" — precisely the remedy proposed by Mr Blair and Mr Brown. And away from the Commission's rigid numerical job targets, Britain and other EU member states are broadly content with the proposals for action in four key areas which the summit is likely to endorse: the promotion of greater entrepreneurship,

partly through tax reforms; methods of increasing employability, including shifting money to active labour market policies; improving adaptability, including modernising work organisation; and the reinforcement of equal opportunities, including family-friendly job practices.

Lurking behind the jobs summit, though, is the even larger aim of European economic and monetary union. In its 1997 employment report the EU makes the connection explicit. "Although EMU as such is not an 'employment policy'," it says, "it provides the opportunity to achieve a macroeconomic policy mix favourable to a sustainable growth of output above the rate of growth of labour productivity, thus resulting in net employment creation."

The problem for jobs is that without the option of exchange rate adjustment, the whole means of adjustment to any outside economic shocks falls on to labour markets. Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays Bank, heads the UK Government's task force on tax and benefit reform to help the Welfare to Work programme. He insists that European labour markets are simply not robust enough to take on this new role under EMU.

Brussels is convinced its own policy ideas are right: "Successful implementation of the employment strategy will be even more important under EMU."

Wrestling with such difficulties will be at the top of ministers' agendas at tomorrow night's grand summit dinner. With a G8 jobs summit later this month in Kobe, Japan, and another EU jobs summit under Britain's EU presidency next May in Birmingham, whether this week's summit will achieve an outcome to resolve these arguments must be questionable. "The jobs summit is a deadly bore," writes Mr Reich, the former US Labour Secretary, of another summit, in *Detroit* in 1994. "I have to sit next to the British Chancellor of the Exchequer [Kenneth Clarke], as round as he is arrogant" — and who Reich says "talks endlessly about the virtues of the free market and the social benefits of selfishness".

For some, Mr Blair's espousal of labour market flexibility is no different to the Tory approach as encapsulated by Mr Clarke. But Mr Blair is convinced that the summit can help to move Europe towards more jobs by means of greater flexibility. And he has on his side the jobs growth records of the flexible labour markets in Britain and especially the US to demonstrate it.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Rate rises cast doubt on Bank's ability

From Mr Alan Wheeldon
Sir, The Bank base rate has now risen a further 1/4 per cent on the decision of Mr George and his Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). It is claimed that this is necessary to control inflation by depressing demand — creating another recession in the process?

Since the election, interest rates have increased from 6 per cent to 7 1/4 per cent. At the same time, inflation has increased from below 2 1/2 per cent to above 3 per cent. Perhaps it is simplistic to suggest that this increase in base rates has, of itself, created — or, at least, contributed to — this increase, and has thus been counter-productive.

For the whole of 1996, Mr George tried his hardest to increase interest rates. His at-

tempts failed because Kenneth Clarke, then Chancellor, refused — rightly as it turned out — to agree to this. The result was steadily falling inflation coupled with a recovery in demand from the low levels during the recession.

Gavyn Davies is reported as saying that it will be two years before the present policy (which he defends) will succeed in achieving once more the magic 2 1/2 per cent demanded by Mr Brown. Is it naive to think that the Governor and his MPC are out of their depth? Yours faithfully, ALAN WHEELDON, Braintree, Essex.

Reassessment of monetary theory needed

From Mr Thomas B. Haran
Sir, I was disappointed when the Bank of England again raised interest rates, as the practice hits only the poor and the hard-pressed. The Bank cannot curb the demand of the rich and the comfortable.

The practice is also inflationary, as the extra cost to business for borrowing is recouped from higher prices.

In any event, demand (and need) should always be accommodated and this can be done without inflation arising. One of my own proposals for dealing with it — "payback law" — is to require companies raising pay, perks and dividends also to make a reduction in prices. That proves that inflation relates

solely to the terms of trade and is not a monetary phenomenon.

Correct monetary analysis shows that money is actually a credit in services of one party and a debt in services of another, both measured in a unit of account. The concept that it is a single item is false.

I have raised these matters with the Bank to no avail. There are paramount needs, therefore, for a reassessment of monetary theory and the appointment of a minister for the protection of the poor. Yours faithfully, THOMAS B. HARAN (Author of *The Monetary Analyst*), 23 Orchard Road, Bromley, Kent.

Arts subsidies and higher-spending tourists

From Dr Max Prola

Sir, Mr Harden (*Business Letters*, November 13) makes the reasonable assertion that subsidy for the arts in London will stimulate the flow of the more affluent tourists, but his argument also raises the question of who should provide such support.

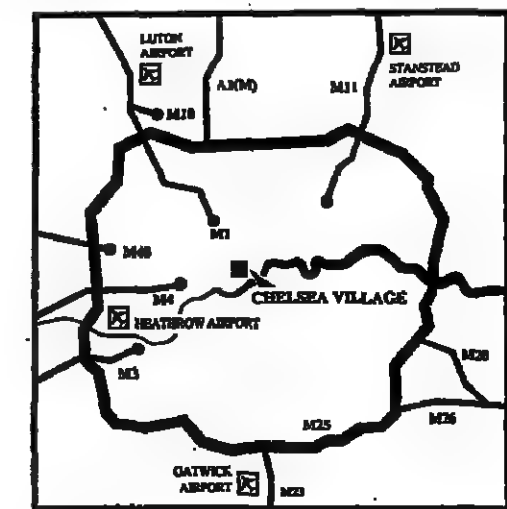
Is it fair to tax people all over the country in order to

benefit businesses located in London? Would it therefore not be more equitable to ask the tourist-related enterprises to provide the bulk of financial aid to the arts in that city?

Sincerely, MAX PROLA, The Croft, Ditchfield Lane, High Leigh, Knutsford, Cheshire.



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Fallen angel

WELL, WELL. Who would have thought it? Sir Peter Davis, the chief executive of the Prudential, will not be returning to our screens in the new year as the "guardian angel" of our savings. As I forecast a few weeks back, the Pru claims the multi-million-pound TV advertisement campaign featuring Sir Peter was only scheduled to run for one year.

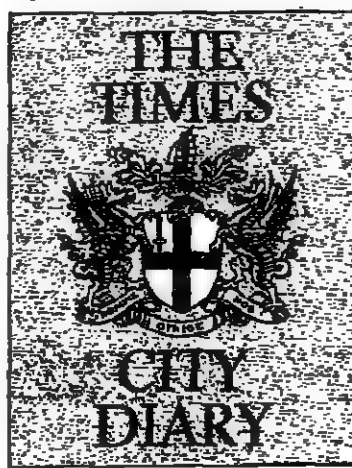
It was hailed at the time as a significant breakthrough in financial advertising, identifying the man prominently with the product. The

fact that the campaign will not be rerun is, of course, nothing to do with the public and humiliating apology Sir Peter has been forced to make for his company's pensions mis-selling. Or the threat from Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday to sack senior people if they do not sort out the problem — as the Pru has failed to do. Nope, no connection at all.

THE latest in a long line of daft corporate name changes is the deeply dull Northern Ireland Electricity, re-born as Viridian. It's verdant, it's vigorous, it's a cross between the two, said the image consultants. They only charged £5,000 for the idea. Alas, the word already exists, for a bluish-green paint pigment — the dictionary fails to mention verdancy or vigour. It comes from the Latin for green. As in the colour of Irish nationalism. Something of an own goal, surely, in a part of the world where Orange, the mobile phone operator, had to tone down the use of its name in advertising?

Timely poach

SBC WARBURG DILLON READ — no wonder it takes them so long to answer the phones these days — is



quietly beefing up its smaller companies research side, an area of the market that has gone nowhere this year. Since the start of the year two support staff have been taken on. More recently a couple of analysts have been poached. Charlie Campbell has joined from Paragon Gordon, and John Dean arrives on December 1 from Albert E Sharp. Still room for a few more on top, though. Warburg is still looking for two more analysts and perhaps another salesman. The idea is to hire specialists in given sectors — Campbell looks at building products, Dean at engineering — for a dedicated small cap team. The timing is interesting. Several City analysts are saying the time is ripe for a revival in the prices of smaller companies sector.

SOMETIMES nothing ever goes right. A colleague went on a short trip to Paris with Barclays this week to see the bank's new foreign exchange dealing system. First, Eurostar was delayed by some 40 minutes, so no surprise there, but it did cut into an already brief stay. Then, no sooner had the journalists filed into the dealing room when the fire alarm sounded and the building was evacuated. The culprit was identified as a smoking crème brûlée in the kitchen.

Still with Barclays, the fixed income and bonds subsidiary run by Bob Diamond that was created when BZW itself was partitioned off and sold to the Swiss has dropped the word "group" from its name: it will simply be known as Barclays Capital. Too many jokes, it seems, about BCG being a nasty shot in the arm.

Turkish delight

MY NOTE yesterday that Asil Nadir has become sufficiently emboldened by his reception in Turkey to set up another business there has prompted a reader to come forward with some holiday reminiscences. It was thought that Nadir, wanted in this country for jumping bail, had dared venture out of Northern Cyprus, a rogue state with few diplomatic ties with anywhere, only this year.

Not so, it seems. He was spotted outside Bodrum, one of the main

tourist resorts in southern Turkey, two or three summers ago. Significantly, he was at Türküköy, the summer retreat for politicians, industrialists and journalists. Even more significantly, he was with one of the country's best-known wheeler-dealers with interests in publishing and property. The British authorities must have been aware of his presence there. My informant says his acceptance by Turkish society and industry might be as well for Nadir. It seems his popularity in Northern Cyprus is waning, as people are becoming dubious about the economic benefits of his relocation there.

MARTIN WALLER



"The writing was on the floral patterned wallpaper"



Sir Peter Davis will not reappear in the Pru's TV advertisements

e

the Fortis group has been successful in its strategy to grow its business in the Benelux region. The group has achieved a strong position in the market, and its success is reflected in its financial performance. The group's strategy is based on organic growth and acquisitions, and it has been able to maintain a high level of profitability. The group's success is a result of its strong financial position and its ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

could, but it is not clear how the group will achieve this. The group's strategy is based on organic growth and acquisitions, and it has been able to maintain a high level of profitability. The group's success is a result of its strong financial position and its ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 19 1997

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[illegible]

En. Securities	127.40	129.10	-1.70
Consumer Ind. Inc.	30.13	30.24	-0.11
Debt Acctn.	54.64	54.58	0.06

Source: FT Information

* Yield expressed as CAGR (Compound Annual Return)
 † En. discount, ‡ Middle price, § No significant data.
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TIME SAUERS

THOSE who produce PowerPoint presentations will be used to the idea of "grouping" objects to keep them in position in relation to each other, but you may not know that you can do the same with objects in other programmes too.

If you have created a complicated document in Microsoft Word which includes several clip art pictures, pictures you have scanned in, graphs, diagrams or even pictures you have drawn yourself, you will not want them wandering all over the place when you change the text flowing around them without permission.

You can ensure they stay in the same place in relation to each other by using Word's grouping facility. Click on the first object on the page, then press and hold down the shift key while you select the rest of the objects you want to be linked.

Click on the Draw button on the Drawing toolbar—if you can't see it, click on View/Toolbars/Drawing—and then choose Group.

Your objects will from now on be treated as if they were one.

CHRIS WARD

Sex and salary

A study shows that girls grow into worse negotiators than men. Susan Gray finds out how to get a rise

First jobs should be a liberating time of independence and money but many people new to the job market let themselves be paid far less than they are worth.

Women, it seems, are programmed from childhood to be poor negotiators. According to a study by the University of Illinois, girls are worse negotiators than boys. When boys find they cannot get a new toy through asking, they switch to bargaining tactics such as offering to clean their room, or to pay for half. Girls, on the other hand, resort to sulking, begging and pleading.

"Alarmingly, parents didn't perceive girls' emotional approaches as negative," says Dr Elizabeth Moore-Shay, who conducted the study. This means girls may have no training in expressing their wants reasonably or in driving a hard bargain, which is a disastrous situation when it comes to salary negotiations.

But it is possible to unlearn the lessons of childhood. Communications and presentation consultant Judi James, based in Central London, says that the key to effective salary negotiations is up-to-date information. "You need to know

market price, what to expect and what sort of figure is reasonable within a negotiating situation," Ms James continues. It is best to have a minimum figure in mind but to make your initial pitch at a higher level.

As every diplomat knows, psychology also plays a key role in negotiations. "Have a back-pocket mentality," advises Ms James. "Your back pocket is your fallback position if this particular company says no. Think positively, market yourself and say 'If this company will not give me what I want, I can go to my rivals.'"

Strategies to ensure that the company in hand does give you what you want include negotiating from the other person's values, selling to their needs. When asked the interview favourite "Tell me why you would like this job," reply in a way that shows your value to the organisation.

Good presentation and appearance are also in your favour. "First jobs require a business-like suit," says Ms James. "Pinstripe material always looks more expensive than plain. Business clothing looks like you mean business." The finishing touch is a smart,

well-organised briefcase. Select Appointments, a nationwide temporary and commercial agency with 80 branches, publishes a yearly survey of secretarial salaries, providing all the data you need to establish your raw market worth. There are huge regional differences between what first jobbing secretaries are paid, with Central London paying the most. But even within regions there are differences between the maximum and minimum pay for a WP audio typist or junior secretary.

In September 1996, according to Select, in Inner London the minimum salary for a junior secretary was £9,800 while the maximum was £13,800. A WP audio typist, a position open to most secretarial college leavers, paid a minimum of £12,900 and a maximum of £16,100. Short-hand makes a college leaver more bankable, with salaries up to £21,600 in Inner London.

Tanya Nunn, temporary consultant at Select Appointments at Oxford, says that college leavers can increase their salary potential by having up-and-running shorthand and relevant work experience, paid or unpaid.



Kids' stuff: which of these two will grow up to drive the hardest bargain?

"It's worth getting temping work to stay in practice," Ms Nunn concludes.

Working women wishing to change the way they view money could enrol on a week-end course called the Money

Factor, run by the Impact Factory based in Islington, London. The director, Robin Chandler, says: "The way to a higher salary is to transfer the value you give to money to yourself. Then you value your-

self more highly. Ask for what you know you are worth and get it."

© Judi James People Talk (Industrial Society, 01753) 01753 500000. The Money Factor costs £170 plus VAT. Call 0171-226 1877.

New role for the secretary?

Kim Howells, Minister for Lifelong Learning, opens a conference in London today called Office in Wonderland, which will look at the impact of technology on office life.

Among the speakers will be Richard Nissim, managing director of a company called Virtual Office, who says his business handles 1,200 calls a day for 250 clients. He points to the role of his "executive co-ordinators" who look after about ten people each. Their job is to monitor e-mails and to keep their clients in touch.

"They are effectively 'mum,'" he says. "But these centres are leading to a drop in support personnel. Voice activated systems will also reduce the role of secretaries. We will no longer have keyboards to five years' time. The new secretaries are like for the executive to do his or her job because they know how to filter the work."

The conference is organised by Fasttrack. Details: 0171-494 1448.

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The Royal College of Nursing is a registered charity which promotes the art and science of nursing. We are committed to equal opportunities and welcome applications from all.

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BRIEFLY NOTED

Britart souvenirs

DESIGN: Foreign heads of state visiting Britain next year for the G8 Summit or the Asia-Europe Meeting will depart clutching "cool" gifts fashioned by the brightest young British designers. The Foreign Office, with the Business Design Centre, is launching a competition for graduates to design a bangle for Clinton, a pot for Kohl or perhaps a quilt for Yeltsin. The Prime Minister and Mrs Blair will be among the judges.

THEATRE: After eight male appointments the new Cameron Mackintosh Theatre Professor at the University of Oxford will be a woman. Thelma Holt, the veteran producer, will follow Sir Richard Eyre into the one-year post. She will give a series of lectures beginning on January 29, and hold a series of "Saturday morning surgeries" for undergraduates involved in the theatre.

BOOKS: Forget Jeffrey Archer or Jackie Collins: the words "a good book for a long flight" took on a very different meaning yesterday as Terminal 4 at Heathrow Airport acquired its first rare-books shop. Travellers who drop into Bauman Rare Books will find the prices somewhat steeper than at the average duty-free: the first selection of rare editions includes a *Ulysses* at £7.95, Audubon's *The Birds of America* at £26.210, *Madame Bovary* at £13.335 and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, a relative snip at £4.830.

MUSIC: Another honour for Sir Simon Rattle. The conductor, who ends his 18-year stint as maestro of Birmingham next year, was given the Royal Society of Arts' premier award — the Albert Medal — last week. Another conductor is also moving on: Semyon Bychkov, currently music director of the Orchestre de Paris, will become chief conductor of the Dresden State Opera and the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra after he quits France next year.

Stephen Dillane tells Matt Wolf why he almost turned down his plum role in the powerful *Welcome to Sarajevo*

The conscientious objector

Woody Harrelson and Marisa Tomei may be the box office draws of *Welcome to Sarajevo*, but the fierce, cool centre to Michael Winterbottom's passionate depiction of the war in Bosnia can be found in Stephen Dillane, the latest British theatre actor to make a bid for film renown.

Dillane has appeared in films before, not least in the little-seen Sandra Bullock vehicle *Stolen Hearts* which the actor reckons he got on the strength of a Snowdon photograph in *Vanity Fair*. But *Welcome to Sarajevo* marks the 40-year-old performer's highest-profile work to date. So it is somewhat surprising to hear that he almost turned the movie down. "I thought, 'That's very dangerous; don't do it. It's too charged; you don't know anything about it,'" Dillane says.

Screenwriter Frank Cottrell Boyce had adapted ITN journalist Michael Nicholson's account of the war and his adoption of a young Bosnian girl as chronicled in his 1993 memoirs, *Notasha's Story*. The producers wanted Dillane to play the Nicholson character in the film.

"By its very nature, film remakes everything in this image of itself, and I was aware that it would only impose on the war this Hollywood version of events, so I thought stay clear; don't touch it," Dillane says.

"At that point it seemed pure Hollywood — heroic English journalist saves lucky little Bosnian girl from slaughter and brings her back to England which stands for all things true and good. It all looked like a horrible package on the page."

What brought Dillane round was seeing Winterbottom's existing films, particularly his bruising road movie, *Butterfly Kiss*. "That made me think, there's actually a purpose in this and it is not entirely without honour. I thought Michael would have the right eye, that his interest was not in easy, smooth, contained emotions. Basically,

at some point I decided to take a leap of faith."

The result is one of the year's most powerful films, retaining the immediacy of a genre classic such as *The Battle of Algiers* without pandering to audience tear ducts as sometimes happened in, say, *Missing*. Premiered at Cannes in May, the film was derided by some (the French press especially) for fictionalising a period of history still too close to us. Dillane, though, stands by the finished product. "The only way you can do justice to the situation is to make the imaginative journey towards it as rigorously and with as much good intent as possible."

Dillane's career has been marked by its own rigour: he is one actor with precious little filler on an impressive CV. But he did not even enter the profession until well into his twenties, having spent a period as a journalist on a local newspaper, pounding the education beat as, he says, "an unrepentant Marxist".

What prompted the switch to acting? "I wasn't enjoying being a journalist and couldn't think of anything else to do, actually," says Dillane, a doctor's son who grew up in Kent and read history and politics at Exeter. The practical spur, he says, came when he read an interview with Trevor Eve, whose own shift from architecture to acting suggested to Dillane that such moves were possible. The imaginative spur arose from reading Peter Brook's manifesto *The Empty Space* back to back with *Hamlet*. "Those two things together made me light up inside somewhere, since in other ways I wasn't a particularly aware or reflective person at the time; I was just kind of morose."

He enrolled in the two-year drama programme at the Bristol Old Vic and remembers the time as "very exciting and just bizarre. At drama school, I was convinced they had the wrong person the first year. The students were either much younger or Cambridge English graduates with a passionate, more intellectual connection to the work, where-



His part as a British journalist in *Welcome to Sarajevo* could make Stephen Dillane hot news in Hollywood. But his heart belongs to the theatre

as I had no idea what was going on a lot of the time."

The usual stunts in rep were next, followed by some TV work. But it was in a production of *The Beau Stratagem*, with Brenda Blethyn, that Dillane began to be noticed, even if the presence in Equity of a Stephen Delaney meant that he launched his career with the surname Dillon. "I hated not having my own

name. I used to phone up Equity every six months asking whether Stephen Delaney had died yet."

Back at the National in 1990, he was in the London premiere of *Dancing at Lughnasa*, missing out on the Broadway transfer of Brian Friel's play when his girlfriend Naomi Wirthner, herself an actress, had their first child (a second is on the way). But the

quantum leap in recognition came three years ago, when he was cast as Hamlet in Peter Hall's production. Dillane staked out a fresh claim to the part as an unusually sardonic, mocking prince who stripped naked at one point and laid bare his nerve ends during a punishing, eight-performance-a-week run over an intense eight months. "Tired isn't the word," Dillane says.

From there it was on to D.H. Lawrence on TV (*The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd*) and Beckett at the Donmar Warehouse (*Endgame*, as Clow to Alun Armstrong's Hamlet), both directed by Katie Mitchell, and inheriting Christopher Walken's Broadway role in *David Laube's Hurlyburly* — "a great play". Dillane has several more films awaiting release, but he

returns to the theatre in the spring, playing Vanya in an RSC-Young Vic co-production. "It seemed irresistible, really," he says, forsaking any thoughts of doing the Hollywood circuit. "Once you've offered things, I don't think it's extraordinary to be able to do them; I think it's extraordinary to be offered them."

Welcome to Sarajevo opens on Friday and is reviewed tomorrow

As ever, Baryshnikov stands alone

DANCE IN PARIS

Michael Baryshnikov stands on stage and lets us listen to his heartbeat. Attached to his chest is a sensor which feeds into a high-volume amplifier. When he moves an arm or twists his torso, the muscular activity causes the sound to blur and rumble. But when he runs or performs a series of nimble, humorous skips, the heartbeat comes across strong and clear, undistorted by lower-body movement.

Sara Rudner's new *Heartbeats* was the last and longest of three solos danced by the great star at the trendy Bobigny theatre in suburban Paris. Injury among Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project troupe made him decide to go it alone.

Still a work-in-progress,

Heartbeats is more an interesting concept than sophisticated choreography, although the concept has limited mileage. We hear the not-so-startling evidence that exercise accelerates the heart, while a lurch into flamenco-flavoured steps introduces an interplay between Baryshnikov's inner-cardiac rhythm and his outer foot-tapping one. But there is something affecting about this glimpse into the internal machinery of such an exceptional individual; it seems that, yes, it is dance which makes Baryshnikov tick.

The movement is fragmentary and vernacular, but frankly anything Baryshnikov does is sensational. In the

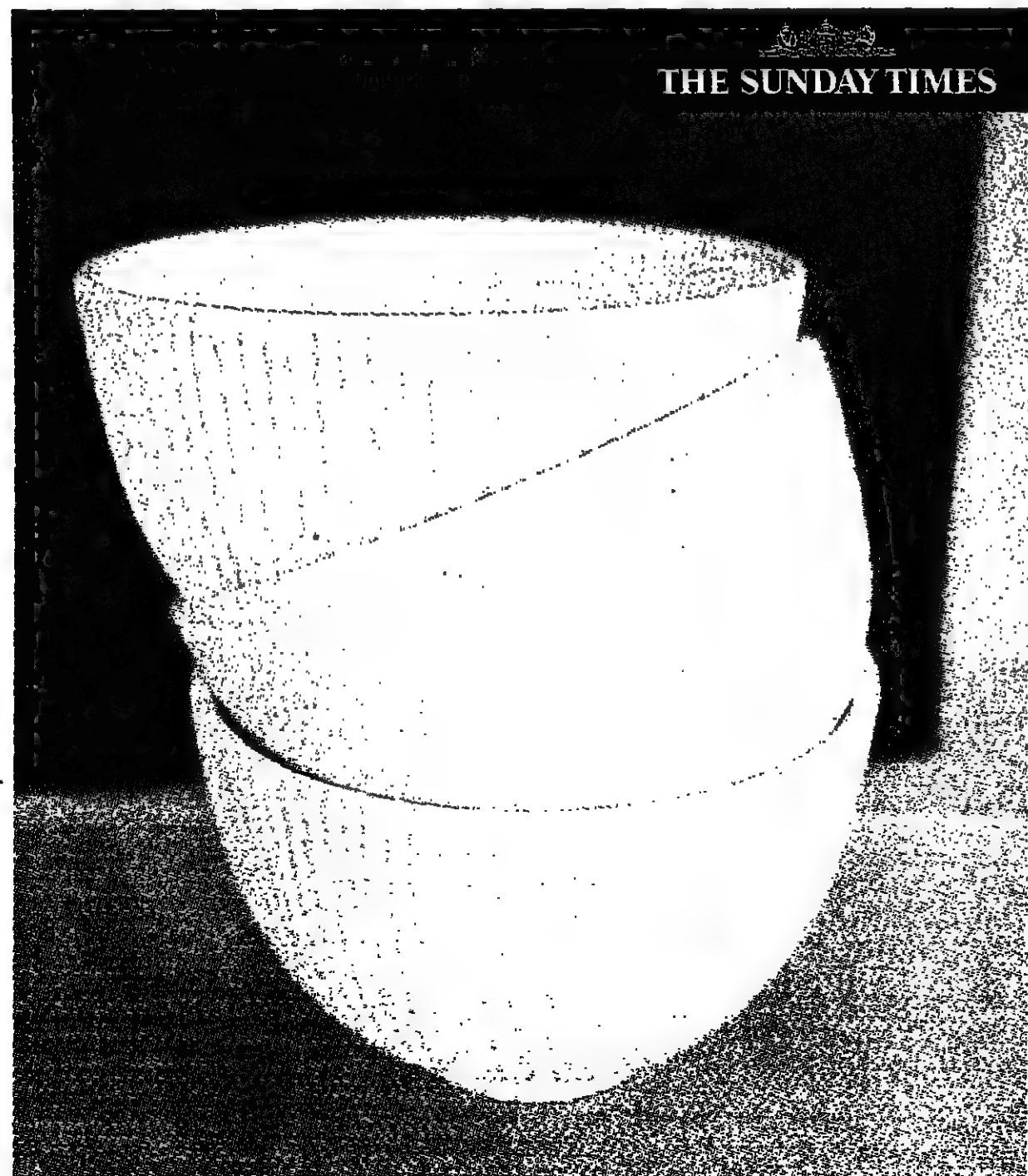
other two solos, José Limón's *Chaconne* and Mark Morris's *Three Russian Preludes*, you notice the spectacular contrast of speed, slow satiny turns giving way to bright, arrowy jets. You also notice the subtlety: the rubato and alterations of emphasis which enrich his dance.

Over at the Palais Garnier, the wonderful dancers of the Paris Opera Ballet have selflessly given body and soul to Lorca Massine's horrible Disneyesque revival of his father's *La Symphonie Fantastique*, created in 1936 and last performed by the Paris Opera in 1963. Kader Belarbi smouldered darkly as the damned, opium-crazed com-

poser, seeing images derived from Berlioz's own written libretto for his symphony. An idealised girl (the beautiful Fanny Gaïda) is eternally out of reach, lifted by groups of men in architectural tableaux. Waiting couples away in the night, fantastical insect-figures dart in a bucolic landscape, satanic spirits gloat over the composer's dead body, the Gaïda character now one of them.

Lorca Massine's tacky and crude version of this phantasmagoria has been condemned by those who remember the earlier stagings. Responsible for Birmingham's equally disastrous *The Three-Cornered Hat* a few years ago, Massine is killing off his father's work.

NADINE MEISNER



THE SUNDAY TIMES

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GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
ZOE WAITES

Age: 22.

Profession: Actress.

Current whereabouts: On a balcony at the Swan Theatre, Stratford, as the RSC's new Juliet. The reviews — "which I refused to read" — have been excellent, describing her performance as "thrilling", "remarkable" and "moving".

Long haul: With an international and regional tour to follow, including dates in Bogota, Osaka and, um, Merton Mowbray, she'll have fallen in love, married and died 171 times by next June. "I'm looking forward to the production evolving."

Hippy chic: She grew up in Totnes, Devon, "a haven for ex-hippies, including my parents, who are both teachers. I spent my adolescence barefoot with beads in my hair."

Unusual taste in interior decorating: Preparing to play Titania in a National Youth Theatre production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, she was struggling to master one particularly long speech. "So I painted it on my bedroom wall and learnt it from there."

Influences: At RADA, which she left in 1996, voice coach Sue Cowan was "a patient and inspired teacher who opened you up to the possibilities of what your voice can do".

Is she in danger of being typecast? After playing Ophelia opposite Michael Maloney's Hamlet in Greenwich earlier this year, she's well on her way to completing the Shakespeare grand slam of juvenile tragic heroines. "After Juliet I'd love to do some hard-hitting, urban new writing. It worries me that people will start to think I'm just a long-haired Shakespearean girl."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL



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Tchaikovsky

Eugene
Onegin



Photo: Peter Dinklage

ands alone

...the work of the first movement, for example, superimpose five different pulses, although the average listener is unlikely to be aware of it. What he or she actually hears is a

ene

egin



Bigger and very Moorish

If nothing else, Chris Smith's plans for cutting London's operatic activity down to a size more appropriate to new Labour's brave new tabloid world should result in benefits for audiences — for the next six months, at least. Hot on the heels of ENO's outstanding *Falstaff* comes the Royal Opera with *Otello*, equally determined to show a packed Albert Hall what it can do best with the most successful "arena" production I have yet encountered.

This Albert Hall debut was to have been a new *Cav* and *Pag*, but the money was not available and they had to fish something out of stock. Elijah Moshinsky and Timothy O'Brien have adapted their production and sets most convincingly. O'Brien's Veronese pillars frame the simplified acting area, and despite the absence of flies his cloths and portacolis somehow rise and fall. Moshinsky's reblocked entrances and exits work well, with two tower structures added to mimic wings.

The show looks exceedingly handsome and, with almighty cracks of thunder and lightning flashes penetrating every nook and cranny of the hall, gets off to even more thrilling a start than in a conventional opera house.

With the stage built out from the platform and the orchestra sunk in front of it, we are indeed almost in a conventional opera house. There is some jiggery-pokery with the sound — not amplification as such, but "ambient enhancement" or some such weasel words: all I can say is that it isn't necessary, and that despite slightly favouring voices at the expense of the orchestra it is better managed than ever before. You can hear everything, and you need to since the company could not afford surtitles — even cash shortages bring blessings.

The main thing is that what is "enhanced" is so good

Otello

Chorus and orchestra are on cracking form, and as well as being an excellent conductor Jacques Delacôte is highly experienced in such enterprises; ensemble is as crisp — no, crisper — than could reasonably be expected, and simply as an account of the score his reading is absolutely first-rate.

There are few surprises but solid satisfaction in the singing. The trumpet-toned, leather-lunged Vladimir Bogachev brings real tenorial "ping" as well as some sensitively moulded soft singing to a role often taken by jumped-up baritones, and he will need to be more than ever leather-lunged since, owing to Giuseppe Giacomini's illness, he will now be singing the Moor five nights running (historians will be rifling through archives to see if this has ever happened before — I would guess not).

The amazing Sergei Leiferkus returns as Iago, a malevolent snarl on two legs when alone, a smiling, studiously relaxed and poisonously "honest" damned villain in company. His sneer over his prone victim at the third-act curtain freezes the blood.

The Desdemona, Daniela Dessi, is new. Her voice, maybe not flattered by "enhancement", tends to grittiness and is not traditionally beautiful, but she has Verdi's idiom at her fingertips and phrases the music with dignity and warmth, saving her best for the Willow Song.

Bonaventura Bottone also makes his company debut as a forthright Cassio, and the supporting roles are well taken. Special circumstances or no, this is a really good show.

RODNEY MILNES



Solid satisfaction: Vladimir Bogachev (who will sing Otello five nights running) listens to Sergei Leiferkus's Iago

No need to cry for him, Argentina

Joanna Pitman listens to the fast-rising young tenor José Cura

José Cura is an enthusiast. We meet in the office of the young tenor's recording company, Warner Classics, high above Kensington Church Street and we talk, or rather he talks — very quickly and with great focus, clearly pointing, cracking jokes, performing for all he is worth. It is easily ten minutes before I can squeeze my second question past him, and I begin to wonder whether perhaps I should simply have sent a tape recorder round in a taxi — but then I would have missed his one-man talk show. And Cura's show is so good he could sell tickets for it.

"I started playing the guitar when I was 12 because I noticed that people who played the guitar were always surrounded by girls. This was Argentina in the Seventies. It was still the era of the Beatles, and teenagers like me wanted to imitate them. Life in my country was pretty tough, and we used to escape into music. Also I wanted to be the centre of attraction."

he met his current teacher Vittorio Terranova and began to concentrate on the Italian operatic style, he has swept across opera stages around the world, singing lead tenor roles and winning rave reviews.

But Cura is a risk-taker. For his first performance as *Otello* — by no means an easy role — he chose to sing live for television and radio under the baton of Claudio Abbado with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. "*Otello* is a role that most singers approach gradually. But I knew I was ready for it and so I did it. People say a lot of things about me but nobody can say I haven't got guts."

He displayed his considerable guts again when deciding to record every Puccini tenor aria in existence at one go for a Warner Classics CD. "No other tenor in the world at this



Jose Cura, "husband and lover"

Cura got what he wanted. The girls duly flocked, and their admiring eyes have never left him — today he positively oozes the virility of his Spanish-Lebanese parentage, and that, combined with his exceptional tenor voice and an impassioned acting style, is precisely the sort of package that sets hearts aflutter from Minnesota to Melbourne.

"My musical upbringing was not particularly special. My mother collected records so I heard all sorts of great music from the day I was born. I never thought I would be a professional musician. I just studied composition and conducting for pleasure after school, and then one thing led to another and I started doing music at university in Rosario. I sang in choirs and studied choral technique for a few years. But when I was 23 I just decided to stop singing because I knew the technique and repertoire I was being taught were not right for me."

stage in their career would attempt their entire Puccini repertoire of arias. But I did. And I'm glad I did. I was prepared and I sang them in my own way. I sing with sob and cries. I really take on the characters I am playing and I portray feelings, real suffering. My songs are not like computer music, they are the songs of real people... I know there is one note that's flat in the recording. It could have been simply adjusted by computer, but I didn't want it changed because I wanted this to be a natural, real sound, not artificial like so many CD recordings."

His teacher was disappointed, but when Cura makes up his mind to do something, people generally know better than to stand in his way. Three years later, however, fate intervened. "A tenor pulled out of a chamber opera the day before the performance. I knew I could do it, so I just took on the role. I pulled it off and, I don't want to sound arrogant, but people noticed. A famous Argentinean tenor in the audience came to my dressing room afterwards and said: 'You must study. Your voice is interesting.' I took up singing again, got myself a good teacher, moved to Europe in 1991 and here I am today."

Cura today, a 34-year-old resident of Paris, "husband, lover and father of three", stands poised in the early stages of a glorious career as one of the top tenors of his generation. Since 1992, when

His next recording will be an album of Argentinean songs, some of his own composition. He will sing in concert with Plácido Domingo in London in April next year, and between his commitments he will rush back to his family in Paris. "It's a wonderful way of earning a living, but real life is more important. I'm lucky to have the security of a happy family to come home to. Yes, I am a diva on stage, but at home I am a normal man. I am passionate, I have seen sadness and I am a man who cries very easily..." At this point, the flood of words threatens to turn into a flood of tears. Cura is a consummate actor, but he is also intelligent and charming. If he is moody, I caught him in a good mood.

● José Cura sings in the Royal Opera House Night of the Stars concert at the Albert Hall tomorrow

CONCERTS: A dazzling ten minutes of contemporary invention; plus period Handel on a deliciously small scale

LAST week was a good one for piano concertos. Just a few days after Peter Maxwell Davies's new concerto for the instrument was introduced to a London audience, that of Thomas Adès also received its London premiere, played and conducted by the composer at the Queen Elizabeth Hall with the London Sinfonietta.

The work's title, *Concerto Conciso*, proclaims its succinctness — a mere ten minutes in duration. But every second is crammed with detail, whether textural or rhythmic. The ensemble is divided into three groups, of which one brings together the piano and a characteristically exotic array of percussion instruments (including temple blocks, log drums, two snare and a piece of foam).

Metrical, the work is hideously complex. The last pages of the first movement, for example, superimpose five different pulses, although the average listener is unlikely to be aware of it. What he or she actually hears is a

Metre maze



generally syncopated rhythm imparting a jazzy feel.

Paradoxically, despite the teeming inner life of the piece and the virtuosity required to bring it off — Adès and the Sinfonietta players handled it all superbly — the overriding impression is one of some what equigous invention. But so cleverly is the whole thing put together that one is happily dazzled by it.

Adès's imaginative programming set the work against the backdrop of three unfamiliar scores from the past few decades. The last thing one would expect from the composer of the *Roma-*

nian Rhapsodies is a score sounding at times like Schoenberg, but Enescu's late Chamber Symphony (1954) irresistibly brought to mind the Viennese composer's first essay in the same genre.

Niccolò Castiglioni's *Canus Planus II*, on the other hand, echoed Webern in its terse, precisely coloured gestures. Its 12 verses are set for two voices, and Nicole Tibbels and Teresa Shaw brought to it exactly the concentrated focus it demands.

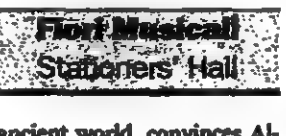
Unfolding on a larger scale is the Concerto of Jean Barraqué, which sets solo clarinet (Timothy Lince) and vibraphone (David Hockings) against a chamber ensemble subdivided not unlike Adès's concerto. Stark eruptions alternate with passages of mollifying lyricism, but although the progress is piecemeal, it cohered, in this superbly executed performance, in a wholly convincing way.

STATIONERS' Hall has been all too rarely used as a concert venue. With a musical history stretching back to the 17th century, when Purcell composed his ode *Hail! Bright Cecilia* for performance on that saint's feast-day in 1692, it is a splendid and appropriate venue for Baroque music.

Now in its third year, the Salm Cecilia International Festival of Music opened with Handel's setting of Dryden's ode, *Alexander's Feast*, or *the Power of Music*, a text that had already been set to music by Jeremiah Clarke and premiered at the Cecilian festivities in Stationers' Hall 300 years ago. That work has been lost, but Handel's version — first heard in Covent Garden in 1736 — is well-established.

Alexander's Feast displays all Handel's dramatic skills as well as a new and forward-looking flexibility in his approach to musical form. Dryden's vivid handling of the subject-matter — Timotheus, legendary lyre player of the

Feasting off Alex



ancient world, convinces Alexander of music's ability to soothe, incite and inspire — itself inspired Handel to a brilliantly evocative score of great depth and beauty. The impact of the small-scale, period-instrument forces of Flori Musicali in the lively acoustics of Stationers' Hall was strong, despite some shortcomings in the performance as a whole.

Chief among these was the singing of soprano soloist Patrizia Kwella which, for much of the time, was unsettled in tone and wayward in intonation, although when it all came together, as in the battle song of the fifth stanza, there were glimpses of a

potentially compelling interpretation. Nicholas Humdall-Smith's sweet-toned light tenor sounded very well in such a resonant space, while Jozik Koc's bass was almost too powerful at times, though he did bring a spectral quality to the evocation of the "Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain".

The orchestra and choir of Flori Musicali were well drilled by their director Penelope Rapson, apart from the odd hiatus, and there was a nicely flowing account by Frances Kelly of the harp concerto that follows, right on cue, the description of Timotheus's "Flying Fingers". The tinkling of bottles in preparation for the post-concert banquet was sadly mistimed, accompanying the lament for the fallen hero Darius rather than the Paeon to Bacchus in the previous stanza. The Festival lasts for a week, with a repeat performance of *Alexander's Feast* next Saturday.

TESS KNIGHTON

Out of the forests and into the Barbican

ARCHITECTURE: A Finnish festival in London is showcasing an approach to design inspired by nature. Hilary Finch reports

Every Londoner loves to hate the Barbican. But imagine what might have happened had a Finnish architect been at the helm in 1972. Just imagine... and see a tiny glimpse of it come true as a six-week celebration of Finnish culture opens at the Barbican, and its spaces — from lake through to foyers, halls and galleries — become temporarily transformed by the work of the 26-year-old Kivi Sotamaa and Markus Holmsten, two of Finland's youngest and most revolutionary architects.

The festival is called *Valo*, Finnish for light. For nothing is more essential to an understanding of Finnish culture. In a country where land is just a thin horizontal line between vast spaces of sky and water, artists and architects have

developed a unique visual sense, their artefacts intensely fused with the qualities of the natural environment.

It is now accepted that Finland was the source of the new architectural regionalism which has pointed a way out of the dead-end of postmodernism. In his compelling study of Nordic architecture, *Nightlands* (MIT, 1996), Christian Norberg-Schulz attributes the country's visual acuity to the possibilities for freedom in a land of infinite extension. It is no accident that in 1998, the year of the centenary of the great architect

Alvar Aalto, a new, all-wood concert hall will rise from the lake-shore in Lahti, 60 miles north of Helsinki. And in the capital itself the new Museum of Contemporary Art, with its highly innovative use of light and interactive spaces, will open in the centre of town.

So, in this festival of visual arts, music, literature and film, it is appropriate that an architectural concept should draw together its

many disparate elements. Sotamaa's and Holmsten's concept has been variously described as a large, folded sequence of spaces, a "surfscape" and an archipelago. Sotamaa and Holmsten work as the Helsinki partners of O.C.E.A.N., a new network of cross-disciplinary architectural practices. They foster the hitherto heretical notion of open accessibility and collective interchange of ideas and

data. Urban design, architecture, installation art must, they claim, be interactive.

Furniture can be seen as an extension of urban space; building as an intensification of landscape. A commission for an embassy will be designed so that "in years to come, it can be used for something entirely different". Space is flexible, constantly evolving, always "decoding" its environment.

Walk through it all at the Barbican, and you might get some idea. But stop awhile in the Concourse Gallery, for here, within the shifting lights of *Valo*, is the total darkness of a Finnish winter. An exhibition called *Talvi* (Winter) features six of Finland's renowned textile artists — all of them women.

In an old converted railway station, home and studio deep within the forest lakeland of south-east Finland, I met Maissa Tikkanen, pioneer in felt textile design. For centuries the Finns had been using felt for clothing and shoes; but, after seeing a film in

1972 about Turkomen women making their nomadic tents out of felt, Tikkanen was determined to create her own method. Layer upon layer, the wool fibres are pressed into shape and shade. A shaft of amber light pierces shifting blues and indigos; the textures of mosses and lichens are evoked in huge hangings for public buildings.

Tikkanen's latest work lets in more light, more air. *Alfa and Omega*, created last year for the Savonlinna Art Museum, reflects a new obsession with the bare patterns of roots, creepers, branches. This, for Tikkanen, is *talvi* or winter, "undressing nature, stripping it of foliage: the beginning and the end of a new life".

● *Valo* runs at the Barbican Centre (01753 638911) until Jan 1



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CRICKET: WALSH'S MISS UNDERLINES DISPIRITED MOOD OF WEST INDIES AFTER DEPRESSING DAY

Pakistan assume position of total command

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN PESHAWAR

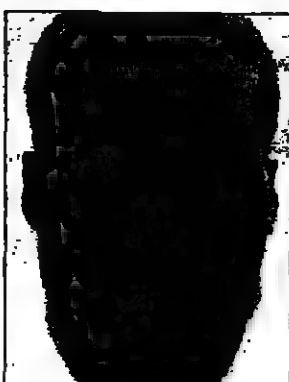
SLOWLY, but no less steadily for that, Pakistan are building a significant lead in this first Test against West Indies here. They batted through the second day to end it on 246 for five, a lead of 95, and if they establish an advantage of 175 runs before West Indies bat a second time, they will expect to win inside four days.

There were some unhappy and footsore men wearing maroon caps at the end of a day memorable chiefly for the fact that Ambrose failed to take a wicket. It cannot have occurred many times in his distinguished Test career that an innings has lasted 87 overs without any contribution from him. He bowled well enough here, but the fact remains as plain as the nose on his face — not for 59 so far.

He was not at all pleased to leave the field three balls early after the batsmen accepted an offer of bad light for the second successive day. Perhaps his frustration was directly partly at himself, for he had just been no-balled for bowling short, twice, at Moin Khan. The five runs that Azhar Mahmood had taken earlier in the over, when Walsh's run-out attempt led to four overthrows, did little to lighten his mood.

Indeed, it was a galling day for Walsh and his men. The crowd pelted boundary fielders with food, stopping play on three occasions, and the captain dropped the sort of dolly at mid-on when Inzamam was five that reduces spectators to helpless laughter.

His players were less amused and Lara, at slip, fell to his knees in despair. There had been a clue in the morning that captain and captain *manque* do not share the same vision. As Walsh left the field for minor repairs, Lara immediately withdrew Simmons from the attack after a single



Ambrose: frustrated

over and called upon Lewis, the leg spinner, for his first bowl in Test cricket.

It was a reasonable decision. Simmons is not remotely good enough a bowler at this level and, on the same pitch that Mushtaq had taken five wickets the day before, Lewis was surely worth a go. In fact his 19 overs brought no wicket for 70 runs and highlighted the vast disparity between these teams in bowling resources. Lewis looks no more than a net bowler.

Pakistan should really have had a better day than they did when Saeed Anwar and Ijaz Ahmed were making 133 for

the second wicket. It was possible to see them carrying a lead of 150 into the third day. Saeed — compact in defence, elegant in attack, particularly through the on side — played quite beautifully.

Ijaz, of course, is a different character altogether. He lived dangerously early on and, even when he found the boundary, it tended to be with one of those unceremonious fang-hand smashes. No matter, it works for him and the partnership was a fascinating alliance of styles. Both batsmen made 65, but there was no doubting whose innings was the better to watch.

Hooper's gentle off spin accounted for Saeed, and Bishop, changing ends after a wayward first spell, got Ijaz in a much-improved second one. It was during that spell that Walsh committed his howler with the dropped catch and West Indies must have known then that they would have to live off scraps.

Mohammed Wasim, after plundering some pleasing runs through mid-wicket, was bowled off an inside edge. Wasim Akram, going in ahead of Mahmood, hardly justified his promotion. He nudged five singles and then advanced so far down the pitch to clatter Hooper into the stands that he was almost within greeting distance of the bowler when Williams removed the balls.

Moin, batting more sensibly, made sure that there were no further mishaps and, to the delight of the partisans, he drove Lewis high and straight for six.

It was not quite the shot of the day. That belonged to the chief of police, who booted some miscreant up the backside as he was being frogmarched out of the ground. They could use a man like that at Headingley.



Ijaz drives during his eccentric innings of 65. Photograph: Mueenuddin Hameed

Gallian confirms move

By RICHARD HOBBS

JASON GALLIAN will confirm today his decision to join Nottinghamshire after rejecting offers from Middlesex and Glamorgan. He left Lancashire at the end of last season and has agreed a three-year contract at Trent Bridge.

Alan Ormrod, the Nottinghamshire team manager, said: "He wants to get his international career back on line and feels the best chance of doing it is with us. He is one of the best opening batsmen in the country, so I think he has every chance." It was Ormrod, while at Lancashire, who originally persuaded Gallian to leave Australia and gave him his county debut

after a four-year qualification period.

Gallian, 26, made the last of his three Test appearances in South Africa two years ago, but scored only 394 runs in the county championship last season at an average of 26.26. His departure from Old Trafford was widely expected and, with the emergence of Nathan Wood and Andrew Flintoff, not long mourned. Nottinghamshire see him as a successor to Tim Robinson, who retires at the end of next season, as the cornerstone of the innings and a future captain.

Ormrod said that the signing would not affect Nottinghamshire's pursuit of Chris Adams. The two held talks on Monday, but Ormrod said the offer was "nowhere near" the £85,000-a-year purportedly on the table from Sussex.

Surrey will stage two Axa Life League day-night matches under floodlights within 48 hours of one another next season, against Sussex and Derbyshire, on Monday, August 3 and Wednesday, August 5. The matches will be in August to avoid a clash with the World Cup final.

Javagal Srinath repairs after a shoulder injury to lead the India attack in the first Test match against Sri Lanka, which begins in Mohali today.

TENNIS

Pierce looks the part as French take lead roles

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN NEW YORK

THE Tricolore was waved over Madison Square Garden with varying degrees of success and defiance by Mary Pierce, Nathalie Tauziat and Sandrine Testud on Monday night in the opening round of the Chase Championships.

Pierce marked her return to fitness and form with a straightforward victory over Sabine Appelmans, 6-3, 6-4. Tauziat overwhelmed the No 4 seed, Amanda Coetzer, 6-3, 6-3, while Testud gave Irina Spirica, the No 8 seed, the run-around for three sets, before losing 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

For Pierce, the victory was sweet. Her career has been a mixture of fame and misfortune. When she won the Australian Open in 1995, she became better known for the antics of her father than her tennis and, as she changed coaches, gained weight and struggled with a shoulder injury, 1996 turned into a year to forget.

This year has been much better as she has fought her way back into the top ten and helped France to win the Fed Cup. However, just when everything was going well, she was laid low by a kidney infection, missed three tournaments and was beaten by Serena Williams in Chicago on her return. That made her pull out of the Advanta Championship in Philadelphia last week to prepare for this event.

Leamer and fitter but still displaying her trademarks — the regal bearing and those figure-hugging outfits — Pierce is back in business. Working with Craig Kardon, who helped guide Martina Navratilova to world domination, Pierce occasionally showed off her new toy — the volley. However, when it came to doing serious damage, it was the familiar forehand that unkind Appelmans, broken early in both sets, she never looked likely to recover.

Pierce's next challenge is a little more daunting, for she faces either Martina Hingis, the world No 1, or Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, the Dutchwoman with the game's hardest service.

With Pierce commanding the limelight, Nathalie Tauziat usually finds herself cast in a supporting role. In French tennis, much to her annoyance, Now 30, she has never made it past the first round in New York before, but, facing Coetzer, she was determined to change that.

So far this year, Coetzer has travelled more than 100,000 miles in pursuit of titles and



Pierce dominant

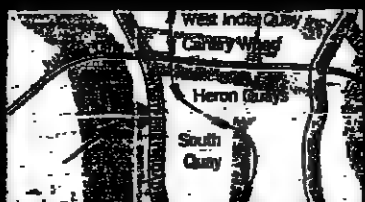
ranking points and now it all began to catch up with her. She looked tired and Tauziat, a wily campaigner, made the most of it.

The championships began with a farewell. After 15 years on the road, amassing 17 grand-slam doubles titles and two Olympic gold medals, Gigi Fernandez called it a day. She and Natasha Zvereva were beaten 7-5, 5-6, 6-4 in the first round by Larisa Neiland and Helena Sukova, having led 4-2 in the final set.

This was always going to be Fernandez's final tournament, but she was hoping to go out with a win. No matter — she is planning a happy retirement on the golf course.

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Gough: enjoying second spell at Rangers

Celtic may be a club of great traditions, but this evening they will be determined to avoid making history. If Celtic are beaten at home by Rangers, they will have lost six consecutive Old Firm matches in the league for the first time in their existence. Extreme measures may be taken in the attempt to pull up short of that dreaded milestone.

Darren Jackson has not played since undergoing brain surgery at the beginning of September, but there is a temptation to field him tonight, when his experience and strength may add vitality to the attack. In any case, Wim Jansen, the Celtic head coach, must be casting around for a replacement for Simon Donnelly, the young forward who has lost form.

Rangers have their con-

Rangers pursue joy of six

Kevin McCarr previews the second Old Firm encounter of the season

drums to resolve, too, particularly since Laudrup is liable to be unavailable, having tweaked his hamstring on Saturday. His club is adept at presenting an impression of calm. "If Laudrup isn't there," Richard Gough, the captain, said, "then we will have to play the best Scotland player of the moment, Gordon Durie."

Some will detect a kernel of arrogance in that serenity, but Gough is simply exuding the confidence of a man who has relished a long ascendancy over Rangers' rivals. He returned to Ibrox last month, after a spell with Kansas City Wizards, and has seemed to be sauntering profitably through his matches since.

The central defender scored the only goal of the game against Celtic 11 days ago. His celebrations on that occasion saw him raise both hands and some observers thought that he was indicating a desire to win a tenth successive Scottish League premier division title this season. Gough scoffs at that notion and claims that the gesture is a mine for "lifting the roof off" and derives from sport in the United States.

"I told Ally McCoist and

Paul Gascoigne about it," he said, "because I never thought I would be doing it." Life is exceeding his expectations at present. Even Gough, 35, admits that Rangers would not have troubled to re-sign him if Alan McLennan and Larsen Andersen had been fit. "I have nothing to prove to anyone else," he said, "but I have proved to myself that I have a touch of hunger left in me."

Gough professes to find a pleasant mystery in the sustained domination of Celtic, since the Old Firm fixture is

ritually claimed to be unpredictable. He has also had a recent opportunity to gauge the narrow margins that can separate the sides. "In the last game," Gough said, "we played as well as we have against Celtic in a long time, but we still only won 1-0 and they could have gone ahead."

Celtic, on the other hand, remember only the impoverished nature of their performance that afternoon. "Their hopes of now atoning for it, and of recording the victory that would see them draw level with Rangers on points in the premier division, are hampered by the absence of Blinkin, who was sent off on Saturday. The side has also lacked creativity in losing its

previous two games, to Rangers and Motherwell. Supporters have grown ever more irascible over the club's failure to sign a proven goalscorer. A deal may be in place to buy Harald Brattbak from Rosenborg, but the Norwegian club seems determined not to sell him until its European Cup Champions League programme ends on December 10. Even if Brattbak agreed to move to Celtic, there would be a further delay while a work permit was sought.

Jensen cannot, for the moment, add to his squad, yet he will still be expected to find a way of changing Celtic's fortunes this evening.

CELTIC (probable): 4-4-2: J. Gould (1), M. Bennett, A. Smith, S. Watt, J. McGovern, P. Landon, C. Bailey, M. Wright, D. Jackson, H. Larsson. RANGERS (probable): 3-5-2: A. Gormley, S. Parris, H. Gough, J. Blinkin, S. McCall, P. Gascoigne, W. Jansen, R. Gough, A. Chalmers, M. Wright, G. Durie.

RUGBY UNION

Wales get ten days to prepare for All Blacks

THE leading clubs in Wales have agreed to an early release of their international players for the match against New Zealand at Wembley on Saturday week. Kevin Bowring, the coach, will have ten days' uninterrupted build-up after the clubs complied with his wishes.

"The national team management accepted the need for the players to prepare properly for the Heineken Cup campaign with their clubs," a spokesman for the Welsh Rugby Union said.

"It was recognised how important that was to their prospects and we welcome the fact that the clubs have seen fit to return the favour with the New Zealand game approaching."

Eddie Jones, the Pontypridd manager, confirmed the spirit of co-operation. "We are all behind the union's playing directorate and the national team," he said. "If Wales don't achieve a degree of respectability against New Zealand, then we are all in trouble."

After receiving unanimous backing from his players' employers, Bowring can now concentrate fully on the most daunting challenge that he has faced since he was appointed as coach of Wales two years ago.

He will announce a squad tomorrow morning and is expected to include Allan Bateman and David Young, the British Isles pair who missed the 46-12 victory over Tonga last Sunday through injury.

However, Steve Moore, the second-row forward, has been ruled out because of a knee injury that forced him to leave the field against Tonga. A scan has revealed ligament damage and the Moseley lock will be out of action for at least six weeks.

Andy Moore, his brother, began his comeback from injury with 20 minutes on the field for Swansea against Cardiff in the Welsh Rugby Union Challenge Trophy game last Saturday. The former Wales second-row forward has had a knee reconstruction and has been on the sidelines since 1995.

Australia's tour pride may prevail

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

RICHIE DIXON, the Scotland coach, insisted yesterday that Australia will provide his new-look side with a stern challenge on Saturday, despite their unconvincing recent form under Rod Macqueen, their new coach.

After losing in Argentina and only managing a draw against England at Twickenham last Saturday, the Australians are under pressure to finish their tour on a high note at Murrayfield.

As Scotland have named an attack-minded line-up, including James Craig, the promising new wing, some pundits are optimistic about their chances of earning a surprise victory against the winners of the World Cup in 1991.

However, Dixon maintained that Scotland's task remains a daunting one and he warned of a possible backlash on Saturday. "Australia have a proud record in this country and, make no mistake, they will be very strong opponents for us," the Scotland coach said.

"I watched their game with England and both sides would be disappointed that the play did not develop as they would have liked. But, with any new coach, it takes time to come up with ultimate conclusions on the way you want to play and Rod is still developing the style he wants."

"If it develops in the same way as with Australian Capital Territories team, then the world can expect some very exciting football from Australia in next couple of years."

Dixon confirmed that he had no qualms about selecting Duncan Hodge to replace the injured Rowen Shepherd at full back, despite the lack of senior experience of the player in the role.

The Watsonians and Edinburgh player will also assume the goal-kicking responsibilities in only his second international, the other being an appearance as substitute against France last year.

"Duncan has been involved in our national squad sessions at full back. We picked the side with a particular way of playing in mind and rather than interfere with the back-line set-up, we decided on a straight one-to-one swap."

Milosevic on the mat over talk of transfer

By RICHARD HOBSON

SAVO MILOSEVIC will tread a familiar path into the manager's office at Aston Villa today when he is called to explain his latest public outburst against the club. If he is trying to manoeuvre a transfer with his persistent criticism, he will be told by Brian Little that his responsibility will remain at Villa Park.

Little has denied that Napoli have submitted an offer of £4.5 million for Milosevic, even though the striker was reported in a Yugoslav newspaper as saying that he knew of interest from the Italian club. Milosevic also said that he had wanted to leave Villa "for a long time" and was unhappy in Birmingham.

Three weeks earlier, when Milosevic last returned to his national squad for the first leg of the World Cup qualifying game against Hungary, he was quoted in a Belgrade magazine as being critical of Stan Collymore, his Villa colleague. Little said that he had accepted an explanation that Milosevic had been misquoted on that occasion; this time, his response may be more forthright.

"Savo has always hankered after Italy, but he knows that his duty is to play for Aston Villa and he should be concentrating on that," Little said. A year ago, Milosevic travelled to Italy to sign for Perugia when Villa accepted a £4.5 million offer, only to pull out as negotiations dragged on. His form for Villa has rarely been better than moderate after joining them from Partizan Belgrade for £3.5 million in 1995, but he enjoys a handsome reputation abroad. He scored ten goals in the World Cup qualifying campaign, helping Yugoslavia to the finals.

With Benfica in Portugal and Borussia Dortmund, the European Cup winners from Germany, reportedly monitoring the situation, Villa would make a profit if they decided to sell. They have an option to extend Milosevic's contract by

a year when it expires at the end of the season.

The disenchantment of one man in a dressing-room can spread quickly. Sasa Curcic, Gareth Southgate and Dwight Yorke have, to varying degrees, been critical of aspects of the club of late. Whether it would be prudent to offload Milosevic, 24, while Villa are still in the UEFA Cup and trying to recover ground in the FA Cup, is another matter, particularly as Collymore, who saw a specialist yesterday, is still in light training after an operation on his sinuses a month ago. "There is no logic in selling anybody at the moment," Little said.

Premiership clubs, which are anxious to maintain their share of income from BSkyB, the television company, have given the Football League 12 months' notice that they want to change the relegation and promotion system and their participation in the Coca-Cola Cup. They want two-up and two-down instead of three and for clubs to be allowed to opt out of the Coca-Cola Cup.

The Football League insisted yesterday that the original agreement drawn up between itself, the FA Premier League and the Football Association was still binding, although it was prepared to hear the new demands.

"The Premier League has given a year's notice that it wants to re-negotiate a new agreement," Dennis Signy, a spokesman for the League, said. "The Football League reply to that was that it was not possible and that is where we stand at this stage."

"We have said without prejudice: Tell us what you want so we can see if there is any negotiation or bartering to do. But there is no end to the original agreement."

Premiership clubs are paring the situation, Villa would make a profit if they decided to sell. They have an option to extend Milosevic's contract by



Manning his post: a young goalkeeper watches the action from afar during a match in the Zambian border village of Livingstone

Livingstone explores new horizons

Inigo Gilmore meets a British sporting missionary who is bringing organised sport to an African village

WHEN Andrew Fairbairn arrived in the dilapidated Zambian border town of Livingstone, the sports-mad locals thought Christmas had come early. In a town where most people play sport in bare feet, the prospect that this "muzungu" (white man) would turn up with footballs, boots and track suits had raised expectations in the community to fever pitch.

When he arrived with little more than the shirt on his back and it dawned on them that Fairbairn was not, in fact, a bearer of gifts, there were murmurs of disappointment. However, six months on, they recognise that he has brought something much more valuable.

"It was not easy to start with because they just wanted material things," Fairbairn, who used to work at the gym at the House of Commons, said. "Even after I told them about my plans, they would say things like 'Well, that's fine, but could you just give us a ball.' They still want the balls, but the attitude is different now."

In Livingstone, Fairbairn, 23, a volunteer with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), has been running training programmes for FE teachers and local coaches covering every-

thing from leadership and organisational skills to fund raising and using sports facilities. In a short time, his programme has begun to transform the face of sport in the area in ways that were previously unimaginable.

It has been a slow process and one that has required patience and flexibility. "To begin with, it was frustrating because people would turn up late for the seminars and then go around greeting everyone in the room before finally sitting down," Andrew said. "I had to learn to accept that this was the way things worked around here and fit my values into theirs. The pace is different."

More than a hundred years after David Livingstone, the British explorer, clapped eyes on the nearby Victoria Falls, the town named after him is like a gaping mouth without teeth. Fairbairn quickly discovered that travelling anywhere by road is an adventure and in the week of his visit a couple of policemen turned up at our hotel to beg for petrol

money so that they could chase after thieves who had robbed the local bank.

The impoverished local population might be short on resources and punctuality, but Fairbairn has discovered that the community possesses unlimited enthusiasm. The locals were quick to accept him as one of their own — a point that was obvious during a visit to an adult education college.

In some alive with noise, colour and dedication, Fairbairn presided over a



Fairbairn: fulfilled

tournament involving football, basketball, volleyball and netball teams of varying ages and shared a few lighthearted moments with the local people. Under his watchful gaze, a group of coaches shepherd teams on and off the pitches and shouted encouragement to the players.

One of them explained that the scenario was novel for them. "Before, it was pretty chaotic because we would just see who turned up and start without a warm-up," David Kalambo said. "But now we use sketch boards to plan everything so that we do not waste our time and energy. This programme has opened our minds and given us a new, enthusiastic outlook."

"The fact that the sports are properly organised and planned has really motivated us," Maria Chitulu, 21, a student who plays football, netball and volleyball, said. "We used to turn up to play a game and sometimes after waiting all day return to our rooms without kicking a ball because our opponents did not show up."

Confidence at the club is high, especially with Kison on the road to recovery from a hernia injury that has kept him out for two months — with Redknapp confident he will be fit to face Aston Villa at home a week on Saturday. West Ham are taking the Coca-Cola Cup seriously, even though there is no certainty of a place in the UEFA Cup for the winner.

Manchester United and maybe Arsenal did not place a great deal of importance on it, but everybody else has. Redknapp said: "We are due a day out at Wembley. Everyone involved in the competition wants to get there, even if

"Now we are seeing our performance improve because we can direct our energies knowing we will play and play at the arranged time."

Since its introduction in 1994, the VSO's sports development programme has expanded from a handful of coaches to about 30 volunteers working around the world. Sports initiatives such as the one Fairbairn has undertaken are accepted as a powerful force in development.

Of the three locations in Zambia offered to Fairbairn, he chose Livingstone because no sports initiatives had previously been attempted there. As well as the frustrations of having to travel huge distances on his motorcycle, he has had to endure energy-sapping stomach problems and take pills daily to avoid contracting malaria.

Fairbairn is eagerly awaiting his return to Britain next year because, as well as the personal satisfaction he has gained, he believes that his spell in Livingstone will have been a good career move. "Some people are reluctant to join a VSO project because they think it will hinder their career, but I think, if anything, it makes you more marketable and I would recommend it to anyone."

New Scottish league likely

PLANS by the ten Bell's Scottish League premier division clubs to establish a new Scottish Premiership by August were backed at two special general meetings of the Scottish League at Hampden Park yesterday.

Voices ranged from 49-29 to 46-32, which means that two or three first division clubs lent their support to the top-flight teams. The breakaway clubs plan to increase membership of the new Premiership to 12 in its second year. The matter will go before the league management committee on Thursday for approval.

Lex Gold, the Hibernian chairman and spokesman for the ten premier division clubs, said: "Today's decision by Scotland's clubs to vote overwhelmingly in favour of our plans represents a major step forward for the game in this country."

"It is clear from today's result that Scottish football can see the benefits of our proposals, which have been developed with the game's best and long-term interest in mind."

"We now expect Thursday's meeting of the league management committee to ratify to-

day's result. We are keen that everyone in the game contributes constructively to the blueprint for Scottish football's bright new future. The hard work starts now."

Manchester United aim to make shares in the club available to more people in a proposal to go before the annual meeting at Old Trafford today. Shareholders will be asked to approve a proposal to issue three shares for every one held as the club increases its share capital by 33.5 per cent to £35 million, creating 270 million new shares.

HARRY REDKNAPP, the West Ham United manager, has warned his players that they must bring to an end the club's unenviable record of being knocked out of cup competitions by sides from lower divisions.

Last season, West Ham lost to Wrexham in the third round of the FA Cup and to Stockport County in the fourth round of the Coca-Cola Cup.

Although Redknapp's first team this season is almost unrecognisable from the line-up a year ago, he has told his new recruits that they must raise their game for the Coca-

Cola Cup fourth-round tie at home to the second division strugglers, Walsall, tonight.

"Over the years, matches like this have always been banana skins for West Ham and that record has to end," he said. "We have to make sure we're ready. We had Huddersfield at home in the round before last and that was a difficult game as well, although we won 3-0."

"Last year, I felt I did not have a team that was capable of beating anybody, to be honest, we could not score any

goals. It's all changed now. It's a different football club. Suddenly, without having spent a lot of money, we've got a playing staff worth an awful lot of money for the first time in a long time."

Over the past 12 months, Redknapp's revolution has brought in players such as John Harrison, Paul Kitson, Ian Pearce, David Unsworth, Eyal Berkovic, Andy Impey and Steve Lomas, coupled with the emergence of younger players such as Rio Ferdinand and Frank Lampard.

Confidence at the club is high, especially with Kison on the road to recovery from a hernia injury that has kept him out for two months — with Redknapp confident he will be fit to face Aston Villa at home a week on Saturday. West Ham are taking the Coca-Cola Cup seriously, even though there is no certainty of a place in the UEFA Cup for the winner.

Manchester United and maybe Arsenal did not place a great deal of importance on it, but everybody else has. Redknapp said: "We are due a day out at Wembley. Everyone involved in the competition wants to get there, even if

there is no place in Europe at the end of it. But that may change and there may be a place after all as the Football League are pushing for it to be reformed."

Redknapp will give late fitness tests to his wing backs, Tim Breaker, who has been training this week despite a hamstring problem, and Impey, who is recovering from a foot injury.

However, Harrison, the club's leading scorer, has been declared fit after an injury scare after West Ham's last Premiership match, at Chelsea, and he may be partnered up front by new signing, Sami Alou, who would be making his full debut.

Meanwhile, Redknapp confirmed that West Ham have put behind them the on-pitch scuffle between two teammates, Berkovic and John Moncur, during the Chelsea game at Stamford Bridge. He said the "players" had apologised to each other.

The Walsall central defender, Ian Roper, has been ruled out after failing a fitness test on his knee. Roper, 20, will be replaced either by the veteran player-coach, Derek Mountfield, or the former England Under-21 defender, Stuart Ryder.

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12/2 1-0 22/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 M. HUGHES (C)
13/2 2-0 22/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
15/2 2-1 16/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
10/1 3-0 66/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
10/1 3-1 50/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
28/1 3-2 40/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
17/2 0-0 17/2	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
6/1 1-1 6/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)
14/1 2-2 14/1	CHELSEA 1-0 SOUTHAMPTON 16/1	5/1 J. DAVIES (S)

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RUGBY UNION: LEAGUE STALWART TALKS OF COMMON INTERESTS AFTER DEFECTING TO RIVAL CODE

Larder calls for unity against the foe

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

PHIL LARDER spoke wistfully yesterday of the "common enemy" that rugby union and rugby league face in this country — teams from New Zealand and Australia — but it seems romantic indeed if rugby league is happy at the potential loss of one of its most influential figures, now that Larder has become a member of the England coaching staff.

His full-time appointment has yet to be confirmed by the Rugby Football Union (RFU), after nearly 30 years as player, coach and administrator in rugby league, but Larder has already committed himself to rugby union. He will help Clive Woodward to prepare England for their international against New Zealand, on Saturday and December 6, and South Africa, on November 29, by which time the RFU should have decided whether he will fulfil the role of national development officer.

"We are trying to make both union and league the pinnacle in their respective worlds," Larder, 52, said. "There is scope for the two codes to work together — our enemy is New Zealand and Australia [series winners yet again last Sunday against Great Britain] and there is no reason why we should not pool our resources against them."

When he was director of coaching for the Rugby League, Larder approached Don Rutherford, the RFU's technical director, and suggested that the two codes could learn from each other, to their mutual benefit, though others may feel that given the dependency of both sports on television funding, it brings closer the day when one or the other will assume supremacy.

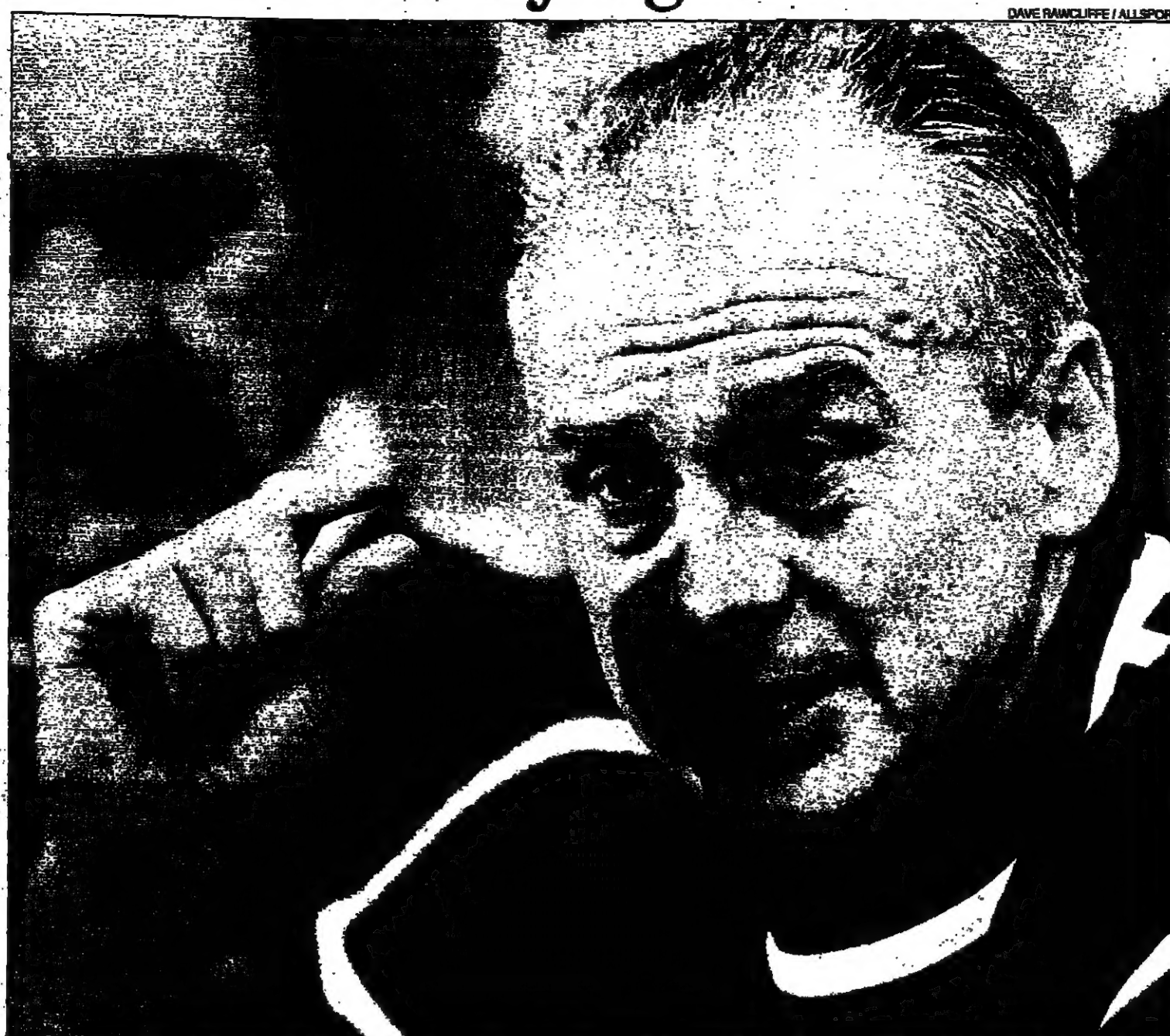
"The games are getting very close in certain areas — defensive alignment, kicking and chasing, angles of running — and I'm sure I can be of help," Larder said. "I'm looking at working on the individual skills of players who will be involved with England at the next World Cup [in 1999] and World Cup after that. With a team like England, the difference between reaching a World Cup final and winning it may come down to inches."

"We have similar problems in both codes. One is that we play too many matches, another is that the close season isn't long enough. These things affect players' preparations, not just for the winning of games but their preparation as athletes."

It is this area specifically that all union's governing bodies need to address, given the elasticity of the season deemed necessary to accommodate an increasing weight of fixtures for club and country.

Former rugby league players such as Scott Gibbs, Allan Bateman and John Bentley made a substantial contribution to the success of the British Isles in South Africa last summer and the new RFU administration is making a big effort to provide all-round back-up to the national sides.

For Woodward, who spent five years in Australia, it is familiar territory, since players and coaches



Larder names New Zealand and Australia as the common enemy of British rugby as he confirms his switch to rugby union yesterday

crossed back and forth between the codes in that country for years, regardless of international rugby football board rules forbidding contact.

"We have known for a long time that there was a lot of skill up in the north," Woodward said. "I want to get closer to rugby league, rather than be seen as pinching some of their people."

The England coach has made no attempt to conceal his belief that the development of coaching in this country remains in its infancy, compared with the standards set by New Zealand and, to a lesser extent, Australia, nor his belief that a strict adherence to international laws has hindered development, whereas the southern-hemisphere countries have been far more pragmatic in their attitudes.

Meanwhile, Woodward is confident that, after the disappointing 15-15 draw with Australia, England can lift themselves against New Zealand on Saturday.

Fitzpatrick considers retiring

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

SEAN FITZPATRICK, the most-capped player in New Zealand rugby history, fears that his career could be over. The All Blacks captain has already conceded defeat in his attempt to be fit for the first international against England at Old Trafford on Saturday, but he admitted yesterday that his long-standing knee injury, which caused him to miss the win over Ireland at Lansdowne Road last Saturday, could force him to retire.

The hooker, 34, started a training session at Morley RFC yesterday, but he was clearly in discomfort and spent much of the morning barking out orders to his fellow squad members and in discussion with the coaching staff.

Fitzpatrick has won 91 caps in a playing career that has seen him win every significant honour in the sport. He was part of the All Blacks side

that won the inaugural World Cup in 1987 and he captained New Zealand when they lost in the final to South Africa in 1995.

He has led his country 49 times — becoming the first New Zealand captain to win a Test series in South Africa in the process — and has won the tri-nations' tournaments with the All Blacks and had Super 12 success with Auckland. Now, however, Fitzpatrick believes that his troublesome knee could bring a premature end to what has been a wonderful career.

"I've never had an injury like this and that sort of thing is going through my mind," he said. "I'm trying to be philosophical about it. Now is not the right time to make that decision. I won't continue to play if it's not right."

Fitzpatrick said that his prospects

of playing on this All Blacks tour were receding. "We'll see how it goes, but in terms of games, it's getting towards the end of the tour," he said. "My knee is aching a bit. I'm more pessimistic about playing on the tour now than I was last week."

John Hart, the New Zealand coach, has not given up on his inspirational captain making a recovery. "We've got another two weeks to go, so we are not writing him off," Hart said. "He's very fit, so he could come in and play at no notice at all. We're keeping our fingers crossed."

Fitzpatrick, who made his New Zealand debut against France in June 1986 and went nine years and 63 matches without missing an international, was more circumspect. He would only go so far as to say that he was keen to play an active part in training sessions.

SNOOKER

McManus on verge of tipping out White

By PHIL YATES

JIMMY WHITE'S resurgence this season has been fuelled by a pair of victories over Alan McManus, but the Scot went a long way to gaining a measure of revenge at the Liverpool Victoria United Kingdom championship in Preston yesterday.

McManus led White 6-2 after the first session of their third-round match and needs to win just three of the remaining nine frames to defeat the six-times world championship runner-up for only the fourth time in 15 meetings.

White had problems with a new tip and found it difficult to judge the thin contacts needed between cue ball and object ball for effective safety play. McManus, who has lost their four most recent encounters, capitalised and established a 5-0 advantage, restricting White to an aggregate of 54 points. His break of 79 in the first frame opened the floodgates before runs of 45, 73, 42 and 126 placed a strangely subdued White in considerable trouble.

During the mid-session interval, White left the auditorium and sought the assistance of Lawrie Annandale, a referee-come-cue-doctor, who hardened the tip with paper from a facsimile machine.

White, the 1992 United Kingdom champion, gained a foothold by winning a scrappy sixth frame, but McManus, assisted by break of 56, moved 6-1 ahead and was poised for 7-1 until, leading 43-1 late in the eighth, he missed a relatively straightforward red to a middle pocket. White seized his chance with a clearance of 79, looking confident despite the scoreline.

Defeat would be a setback to his chances of returning to the game's elite. Having figured in the semi-finals of the Grand Prix last month, White had high hopes of regaining the place in the top 16 he relinquished at the end of the 1996-97 season after 15 years of unbroken occupation.

Peter Ebdon, the No 5 seed, recovered from a hesitant start to be level at 4-4 after the opening session against Jason Prince, an Irishman based in Yorkshire. Ebdon, who went in-off unhelpfully after potting the black to lose the first frame, trailed 3-1, but stole the fifth with a clearance of 45 and began to look the more likely winner. Either McManus or White awaits in the fourth round.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Wigan move agreed

RUGBY LEAGUE: Wigan Warriors have confirmed plans to share Wigan Athletic Football Club's new 25,000-capacity stadium, which is to be built at Robin Park in the town (Christopher Irvine writes). Wigan have sold Central Park for supermarket development and are due to move out after the 1999 season.

Tommy Martyn, the St Helens stand-off half, has withdrawn a transfer request and agreed a new three-year contract. Martyn has not played since May because of a knee injury.

Drawn apart

HOCKEY: The seven remaining Premier League sides have avoided each other in the fourth round draw of the English Women's FA Cup. At least two non-league sides are assured of a place in the last 16, with Sunbury taking on Welton and Harleston facing Dereham in a Norfolk derby. The holders, Hightown, have a home draw against Canterbury, who are now second in the first division.

Raleigh recruit

CYCLING: Carl Sturgeon, whose victory in Sunday's second round of the cyclo-cross National Trophy gave him the overall lead in the series, will join the strong Team Raleigh squad which is led by Barrie Clarke, the national champion, on January 1.

Miami lead

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Dan Marino threw for 234 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Miami Dolphins to a 30-13 defeat of the Buffalo Bills in the Monday night game, giving them a share of the lead in the AFC East division with the New York Jets.

Awkward start

HOCKEY: England will play Spain, the 1996 Olympic silver medal-winners, in the first of their pool matches in the men's World Cup in Utrecht, Holland, on May 21 next year.
 Results: May 21: Spain 6-0 (Spain) May 22: v Portugal 1-3 (Spain) May 23: v Poland 5-3 (Spain) May 27: v Australia 5-0 (Spain) May 28: v Malaysia 3-0 (Spain)

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): Miami 30 Buffalo 13.

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Portland 100 Dallas 75.

BILLIARDS

PRESTON: United Kingdom championship: Quarter-finals: In Russell (Eng) vs Paul (Ind) 5-0; In Russell (Eng) vs Paul (Ind) 5-0; In Russell (Eng) vs Paul (Ind) 5-0; In Russell (Eng) vs Paul (Ind) 5-0.

BOXING

HILTON HOTEL, London: Amateur international: England 5 United States 3; England names first Heavyweight W. Belmont 11 T. Tullio, no hit met, Light-heavy: M. Vence lost to R. Stevens, pts. 10-12; Middle: J. Pearson lost to T. Williams, pts. 10-12; Welter: M. S. S. lost to N. Myers, pts. 10-12; Feather: S. Bell lost to G. Fennell, pts. 10-12; Super: 11 points to N. Norman, pts.

FOOTBALL

Monday's late results: SPAIN: Second round: Kidderminster 0-1; DR MARTINS LEAGUE: Southern division: Chesham 0-1; RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Gosham 0-1; AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Chesham 0-1; AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Chesham 0-1; AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Chesham 0-1.

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

When dummy has bare trump honours and plenty of tricks on the side, making dummy ruff can be the winning defence — it may promote a trump trick. This is a simple example.

Dealer North	Love all	IMP
♠ A862		
♥ A9843		
♦ J10		
♣ 765		
♠ K753		
♥ J865		
♦ 985		
♣ A753		
♠ 43		
♥ 103		
♦ 72		
♣ 86		
♠ 43		
♥ 103		
♦ 72		
♣ 86		

Contract: Four Hearts by South. Lead: ace of clubs.

In the match between Belarus and Germany in the 1997 General European Championship, North-South arrived in Four Hearts after South had shown 10 or 11 points and no club stopper. The German West, Andrew Holowski, brightly played three rounds of clubs. Declarer had to ruff in dummy and now West's trump holding was worth two tricks. Had West switched after taking two clubs, declarer could have arranged to unblock dummy's ace-queen of hearts and then come to hand to draw a third round with the king. Then he plays on diamonds, losing two clubs and just one trump.

□ The Times Book of Bridge 1, a compendium of some of Robert Sheehan's daily columns, is now available in all good bookshops or direct from the publisher, B.T. Batsford, on 01376 321276, price £6.99 (plus £1 postage and packing).

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

- By Philip Howard
- AULARIAN
a. A winged dinosaur
b. A monophysete heretic
c. To do with a college
- EASCINATOR
a. A head shawl
b. A magpie trap
c. A player in the Wall Game
- CLEIDIC
a. Wrapped up
b. Pre-Jurassic
c. Hibernating
- DYBBUK
a. A two-volume German book
b. A nassy spirit
c. To entrup

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Veteran's exploit
Earlier this week I have mentioned performances by the two veteran Russians Vasily Smyslov and Mark Taimanov. A third Russian veteran whose play can still display the sparkle of his greatest days is 73 year old David Bronstein. In the following game he constructs a superbly attractive finish.

White: Bronstein	Black: Vezder Hoogeteen 1997
1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	e6
3 Nf3	b6
4 g3	Bb7
5 Bg2	Bd4+
6 Bc2	c5
7 dxc5	Bxc5
8 0-0	0-0
9 Ne4	Nc4
10 Qc2	Nc2
11 Qd2	a6
12 Bc3	Qc7
13 Bf1	Bd7
14 Rd1	Bd7
15 Qb3	Rd8

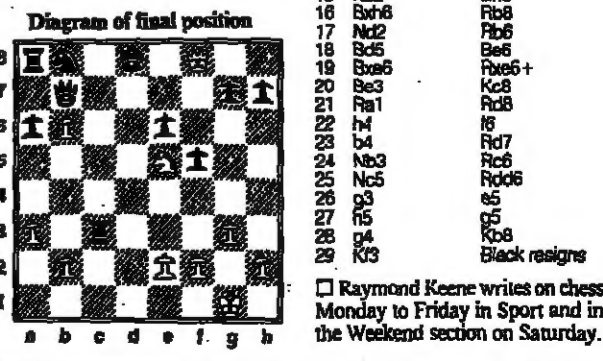


Diagram of final position

Black to play. From the game Hold — Speelman, Hastings 1971. With three pawns and a bishop against a rook, Black has a very good position. He now increases his material advantage to even greater proportions. Can you see how?

Solution on page 50

Athletes who have ability but no class will never be great



Jonah Lomu and the All Blacks are the ultimate bullies: Hick, the ultimate flat-track bully; Cole, a reformed flat-tracker; and McEnroe, a classic non-bully

An old sporting phrase slipped into my mind as I watched New Zealand put 52 unanswered points past Ireland on Saturday. The phrase was "flat-track bully". Not altogether inappropriate, because the phrase was a New Zealander's contemptuous assessment of the talents of Graeme Hick a few years back.

The ability to dismiss inadequate opposition is nothing to be sneezed at. It is a job that needs to be done and the All Blacks, once they had found their stride, were relentless, merciless, utterly unforgiving. Ireland needed to be beaten and were soundly beaten. If New Zealand were, indeed, flat-track bullies in the second half, one can only use the term admiringly.

The term was not used admiringly of Hick. It implied a limitation. It meant that Hick was a superb player against poor opposition and in favourable conditions. There was probably no better man in the world when it came to the task of destroying inadequate bowlers.

If ever you needed someone to score a century against Holland, then Hick was your man — Why not? Someone has

If you cannot beat the best, be a bully

to do it — but when Hick came to face the best bowling in the world, something went out of him. It was never his ability to play cricket that was in question. That elusive and terrible failing has made Hick one of the most fascinating sporting conundrums of all times.

Entire teams can take on the mantle of the flat-track bully. Rangers have little option to do anything else. Europe routinely and inevitably finds them out. Manchester United showed signs of going the same way. Domestic football seemed as if it was becoming easy. They put nine goals past Ipswich Town a couple of seasons ago, with Andy Cole, a flat-track bully within a flat-track bully team, scoring five. But Europe found them out.

It is vasty to the credit of the team and the manager that this season, United, and Cole within it, have transcended

SIMON BARNES



their flat-track bully status. So far, they have bullied the hapless at home and confidently taken on the best of Europe as well. It is no small matter to acquire the status of a flat-track bully and then go beyond it.

When he could not get his mind around the straightforward task of a straight-sets win against a journeyman, the devils would gather and the barley water would start to fly. Note that he never mislaid the marbles in a grand-slam final. He never snarled when he played Bjorn Borg.

Borg, too, often lacked the quality of flat-track bully. He would normally need some near-disaster, some wobbly five-setter in the early rounds at Wimbledon, before his mind focused on his target. In contrast, Richard Krajicek, who won the men's singles title last year, did so in the manner of a flat-track bully, after taking his chance against an unfit and out-of-sorts Pete Sampras on the way.

People such as Krajicek and Hick are just as good as the very top men, sometimes they are even better, but they do not normally win. They do not often make big scores against the very best. Why is this?

My mind goes back to horses, as it tends to, and to that indefinable thing called class. It happens, often enough, that faster horses do not wish to overtake slower ones. It is to do with dominance hierarchy, a race being a temporary herd. It is a question of knowing your place, a matter summed up for all time in the phrase "cheep horses know it".

A true flat-track bully, team or individual, has ability without class. He has everything it takes to be a top dog except the will. Every flat-track bully is a cheap horse and, in his heart, he knows it.

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MOTOR RACING

Coulthard upset over sacrifice at Jerez

DAVID COULTHARD said yesterday that he was upset when his McLaren team ordered him to allow Mika Hakkinen, his team-mate, to pass him and claim victory in the European Grand Prix that ended the season last month. The Scot said that he was set to win the race at Jerez, Spain, before the command came through from the pits to allow the pursuing Hakkinen through. "The reason I was disappointed was that there had been no discussion before the race about the possibility of that situation," Coulthard said. "But Mika deserved the win. It is important to remember that it is a team sport."

Coulthard also defended the penalty of community work that was given to the Ferrari

driver, Michael Schumacher, after his running of the Williams car of Jacques Villeneuve, the world champion, in the race.

There was widespread criticism of the punishment, which also included stripping the German of his second place in this year's Formula One world championship. The ruling was given by FIA, the world governing body of motor sport.

"To ban him for a couple of races would not be healthy for the sport and a fine would hardly dent his £30 million-a-year salary," Coulthard said. "The fact that he has to spend time in the off-season with young people is fine. The fact that there has been a spotlight on his actions will make him think again."

SAILING

Swedes set pace for Fremantle

SWEDISH MATCH, the leaders in the second leg of the Whitbread Round the World yacht race, reassessed themselves yesterday in the gruelling Southern Ocean. Clumsy Krantz, the skipper, and his crew have endured rough seas and a broken rudder and seen their lead cut by 200 miles by the backmarkers.

However, for 12 hours yesterday, they were the fastest boat in the fleet, with an average speed of 18 knots. Krantz said: "We have been feeling like a hunted animal for the last day and a half, but, limping round the Kerguelen Islands, we found new food and energy and now we are on the run again."

Swedish Match was 1,717.6 miles from Fremantle, Australia, yesterday and, at the present rate of progress, could complete the second leg of the race by Monday.

Innovation Kvaerner remained second, 326 miles behind, having gained 8.4 miles yesterday morning. However, the Norwegian boat lost time while the crew repaired damage to the bow and replaced battens in the mainsail, enabling Toshiba to move 60 miles closer in third place.

After the repairs were completed, Kvaerner reached a speed of 20 knots. "We got the thing down and took it easy for a while when I considered that we had gone beyond the safety limit," Knut Frostad, the Kvaerner skipper, said. "The wind dropped a bit before we got something bigger up — and now we're flying again."

TELEVISION CHOICE

More murder for Morse

Inspector Morse
ITV, 8.00pm (not STV or Grampian)

Devotees of John Thaw's grumpy, opera-loving detective can be assured that his 31st televised case is well up to the standard of the previous 30. The series may have been running since 1987 but the formula has changed little and at this rate old Morse could still be solving murders well into the next century. By now the appeal of the show lies in feeling comfortable with predictable ingredients. When a young woman is shot dead in her home and an Oxford college prepares to choose a new Master, we can be sure that the two are linked. We know that the unravelling of the crime will be leisurely and convoluted. We can relish (all too briefly) James Groom's irascible Chief Super and savour the contributions of the usual quality-cast which tonight includes Richard Briers, John Shrapnel and Maggie Steed.

The Real Holiday Show
Channel 4, 8.30pm

Girl power is the theme of tonight's show in which all the featured holiday-makers are female. Just how much power Sarah and her friends possess is limited by the fact that her Dad comes to Spain with them. They are only 15 and taking their first holiday together and he feels they need a chaperon. Being a probation officer, he says, means he is used to taking groups of delinquents away (joke). The self-styled Sheffield Spice needs nobody to look after them as they live it up in Magaluf. One describes it as 14 Friday nights on the trot. Drink and sex loom large, especially the former. After this it is a relief to turn to three women in their 80s and to hear about their trip to St Petersburg, where they sampled the vodka and the Metro and were relieved that the food was not as bad as they had expected.

Modern Times: The Bubble
BBC2, 9.00pm

They call it the bubble because it insulates them from real life. Daniel Reed's film is set in Meribel, a ski resort in the French Alps, and features three Britons who, in their various ways, have gone there to escape. Henrietta, a 23-year-old from Henley-on-Thames, has signed on as a chalet girl



Chalet girls take a break (BBC2, 9.00pm)

for five months. She gets £55 a week, with free board and lodging, and it saves her having to decide what to do with her life. Andy also cleans out chalets, though at 32 he realises he is getting a bit old. But, as with Henrietta, it is an excuse not to face up to the real world. The third subject, Tony, is a headhunter who earns so much money working three days a week in London that he can afford to spend most of his time in Meribel. But bubbles tend to burst and as the season ends, the trio must come out of their cocoon and face the world.

Secret Lives I: Ron Hubbard
Channel 4, 9.00pm

The founder of the Church of Scientology, this profile observes, "spent much of his later life at sea, on the run from those who accused him of being a crook or a charlatan". Disappointingly, perhaps, the film fails to resolve these charges one way or the other. All the same, it is hardly a flattering portrait, even though it is largely based on the testimonies of Hubbard's close associates. As is the way with leaders of cults, Hubbard had a way of getting people to do his bidding. "I was overwhelmed," recalls one supporter, Cyril Vosper. "I was meeting God with plus signs." The irony highlighted by the film is that the man who claimed to "cause the minds of others failed with his own". He became dictatorial, paranoid and egotistical and died a recluse. But the church continues to protect his image. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Late Night Opening: The Ignorodon
Radio 4, 11pm

The Late Night Opening comedy slot has its ups and downs, as comedy slots tend to do, but this, the start of a three-parter by Paul Lucas, is one of the up, especially for those who enjoy a mixture of history and wordplay. Captain Jack is a punner who puns his way all round our heads. Passenger: "That's punctuation, captain." The impetus for the drama is the attempt by Mr Brooks (Bernard Cribbins) to have an unforgettable sea voyage after "a lifetime in custards". The unplanned lighthouse rendezvous is the start, rather than the end, of the adventure. Includes the best of the comedy about the notorious Woe Betides. As well as Cribbins, the cast includes Paul Haigh (Eric in Preston Front), Rosemary Leach and Patsy Byrne.

RADIO 1

6.30am Keith Greening and Zolt Bel. 8.00 Simon Mayo. Includes Radio 1's Greatest Hits and Dead or Alive. 12.00 Jo Whitey. Includes 12.00pm Newsbeat. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. Includes 2.00pm Newsbeat. 4.00 The 100. 6.00 Dave Pearson. 6.15 Newsbeat. 6.30 Evening Session. 7.00 More music and session tracks. 8.30 Trade Update with Clare McDermott. 8.40 John Peel. Includes Calexico in session. 10.30 Charlie Jordan. Includes The Beatles' Rock Show. 10.50 1.00am Chris Warren. 4.00 Chris Moyles.

RADIO 2

6.30am Alex Lester. 7.30am Wake Up to Wogan. 8.30am Nick Brown. 11.30am Jimmy Young. 1.00pm Debbie Thompson. 2.00pm Shazam. 3.00pm Nick Brown. 4.00pm Nick Brown. 5.00pm Nick Brown. 6.00pm Nick Brown. 7.00pm Nick Brown. 8.00pm Nick Brown. 9.00pm Nick Brown. 10.00pm Nick Brown. 11.00pm Nick Brown. 12.00am Nick Brown.

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast Programme. 8.00 Nick Campbell. The daily topical discussion and Euronews. 12.00 Midday with Mair. Includes Moneycheck with Phillip Lamb. 2.00pm Puscose on Five. 4.00 Nationwide with Julian Worlock. 7.00pm News. 8.00pm The 100. 9.00pm The 100. 10.00pm The 100. 11.00pm The 100. 12.00am The 100.

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Ross and Carol McGiffin. 8.00 Scott Chisholm. 12.00 Lorraine Kelly. 2.00pm Tommy Boyd. 4.00 Peter Deely. 7.00 Anna Rieburn. 8.00 James White. 1.00am Ian Collins.

WORLD SERVICE

Blue Collar
Radio 2, 9pm

Start of a four-part series presented by Billy Bragg, whose own musical focus has crystallised over the years from a pop-rock base into a much more folk-oriented style now. The series sets out to tell the history of working-class music in the United Kingdom and America, so it is territory familiar to Bragg. That is especially so of tonight's programme on folk music, which explores the origins of folk in the American Civil War and the British Industrial Revolution, taking in an impressive range of singers, from Woody Guthrie in the 1930s to Britain's own McCall 40 years later. The 1990s has brought a working-class revival in terms of popular song, thanks to albums by Bruce Springsteen among others. Peter Barnard

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Alan Martin. 8.00am Henry Kelly. 1.00pm Lorraine Kelly. 2.00pm Concerto. Brahms (Violin Concerto in D). 3.00pm Jamie Cullum. 7.00pm Newsnight with John Burt Foster. 8.00pm Haydn. 9.00pm Haydn. 10.00pm Haydn. 11.00pm Haydn. 12.00am Haydn.

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Jeremy Clark. 7.00am Chris Evans. 10.00am (FM) Robin Banks. (AM) Graham Dene. 1.00pm (FM) Nick Abbot. (MW) Nicky Home. 4.00pm Russ 'n' Jon. 7.00pm (FM) Paul Coyte. (AM) Colin Jones. 10.00pm Nick Forster. 2.00am Richard Porter.

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Includes Vivaldi (Oboe Concerto in G); Dellore (Violin Sonata No 3); Mozart (Piano in F minor); Debussy (The Wild Dove); Chabrier (Españole); Alfvén (Swedish Rhapsody No 1, Midsummer Vigil). 9.00am Morning Collection, with Peter Hobbday. Elgar (Introduction and Allegro); Grieg (O Intermezzo); Fauré (The Three Corners Hat). 10.00am Musical Encounters, with John Toal. Telemann (Oboe Suite in G); Schubert (Song selection); Glavie (Violin Concerto); The Elgar (Violin Concerto for Orchestra No 2, Chimes); Haydn (Piano Trio in E); Herce (Telemanniana); Dohnanyi (Suite in the Old Style); Kodaly (Haydn János). 12.00pm Composer of the Week: Strauss, John. Descriptions of the influence of Wagner on the work of Strauss. 1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. Live from the Wigmore Hall, London. Jean Tiers (Violin); Jess-Kropf (Violin); Stefan Jess-Kropf (Piano). Includes Johannes Brahms (Piano Trio in F); Schubert (Piano Trio in B flat). 2.00pm Midweek Music. Telephone 0171-765 4338. 4.00am Choral Evening. Live from Lichfield Cathedral. 5.00pm In Time, with Sean Rafferty. Gramophone Award-winner Murray. Herbie's new recording of Schumann's Piano Concerto has given him a passion for music by the keyboard master. Music includes Rachmaninov's ballet Spartacus, about the revolt of Russia's serfs. 7.30pm Performance on 3: The Royal Concert. Live from the Barbican Hall, London. Steven Isserlis.

RADIO 4

6.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast. 6.00am News Briefing. 6.10am Shipping Today. 6.25am Prayer for the Day. 6.30am Today. 6.40am Today in Parliament. 8.55am Weather. 9.00am News. 7.00am The Archers. 10.00am (FM) News. Power and How to Get It (P4). 10.10am (LW) News. This Day, with Geoffrey Wheeler. 10.30am Woman's Hour. Introduced by Jenni Murray. 11.30am Gardeners' Question Time (Q). 12.00pm News. You and Yours, with Margaret Collins. 12.55pm Diner's Lunches (S/R). 12.55pm Weather. 1.00pm The World at One, with Nick Clarke. 1.40pm The Archers (P). 1.45pm Shipping Forecast. 2.00pm News. The Archers. 2.15pm The Archers. 2.30pm The Archers. 2.45pm The Archers. 2.55pm The Archers. 3.00pm The Archers. 3.15pm The Archers. 3.30pm The Archers. 3.45pm The Archers. 4.00pm News. 4.05pm Kaledoscope. Paul Garbett reviews the musical Chicago and discusses war on film with the opening of Regeneration and Welcome to Sarajevo. 4.45pm Show Story: The Winner, by Barbara Kinyere, read by Anthony Cheung. After a substantial win on the pools, a Ugandan villager struggles to come to terms with his sudden popularity. 5.00pm PM 5.45pm Party Political Broadcast by the Liberal

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1: FM 87.8-89.5. RADIO 2: FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3: FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4: FM 92.4-94.6. LW 198. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE: MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE: MW 648. LW 198 (12.45-5.00). CLASSIC FM: FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO: FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO: MW 1053, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

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Six finalists in William Hill book of the year

SPORT

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Pakistan build strong position against West Indies



Swiss manager to take over from Francis at White Hart Lane

Tottenham seek Gross profit

By DAVID MADDOCK

TOTTENHAM Hotspur will announce today that Christian Gross, at present in charge of Grasshopper Zurich, is to take over as manager. He will succeed Gerry Francis, who cleared his desk at White Hart Lane yesterday — almost three years to the day since he joined the club.

Gross, 43, will be in charge of the Tottenham team for the televised FA Cup Premier League match against Crystal Palace at home on Monday night. Romano Spadaro, the president of Grasshopper, said last night that Gross had already signed a contract and would be taking his assistant coach, Fritz Schmid, with him to White Hart Lane.

Spadaro also said that Gross had approached him ten days ago and had asked to be released from his contract, which was due to expire next summer. Spadaro had turned down three previous requests. "This time I couldn't refuse his request because one of the top

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clubs in London has a higher calibre than Borussia Mönchengladbach, SV Hamburg or a Japanese club, which have all tried to get our trainer in the past two years," he said.

Gross's appointment finally brings to an end the saga of rumour and speculation surrounding Francis's position. He had come under extreme pressure from Tottenham supporters who bemoaned the team's lack of flair as they languished in sixth place in the Premiership, one point above the relegation zone.

It is understood that he had tried to resign on two separate occasions. He talked openly a week ago of assessing his future, after Spurs suffered an embarrassing 4-0 defeat away to Liverpool. Then he was told by Alan Sugar, the Tottenham chairman, that he was required to stay at least until the end of the season, when his contract expired.

Last Sunday, Sugar said: "I



Pointing the way: Gross is the man that Tottenham are pinning their hopes on to revive the club after its declining fortunes in the Premiership.

don't think that a rudderless ship will help Tottenham in anyway. I hope that Gerry sees through his responsibility. Let us get to the end of the season and look at it again then."

Francis went in for training as usual yesterday, even though his players had been given a day off. He departed quickly, though, giving the

indication that there had been a dramatic change in his position.

In choosing Gross, a Swiss, Tottenham have followed the trend set by their London rivals, Arsenal and Chelsea, in appointing a continental coach. Bernie Kingsley, of the Tottenham Independent Supporters' Association, said last night: "He's a relatively unknown continental coach, but he could be just the thing to turn everything around."

Gross won the Swiss championship in 1995 and 1996 and qualified for the European Champions' League

in both seasons. They finished bottom of their group in 1995, but in 1996 they beat Rangers 3-0 in Zurich on the way to finishing third.

Francis's name will now be linked even more strongly with the vacancy at Queens Park Rangers, the club he managed for three years before he left to join Tottenham. The Nationwide League first division club recently parted company with Stewart Houston, their manager, and Bruce Rioch, his assistant. John Hollins is in charge at present in a caretaker role.

One person who may be

pleased to see the arrival of Gross at White Hart Lane is Ramon Vega, Tottenham's Switzerland defender, who played under Gross at Grasshopper. Several Spurs players, however, are thought to be unhappy with recent developments at the club and could be looking to leave.

Top of the list is Spil Campbell, the England central defender. He has been the subject of two inquiries already from Liverpool and it is understood that they have now tabled a third bid. Campbell turned them down during the summer, preferring in-

stead to sign a new four-year contract with Tottenham. Recently, though, he has indicated to close friends that he has become increasingly disaffected with life at White Hart Lane and would consider a move.

Spurs are unlikely to allow him to go readily, but Liverpool would be prepared to offer "Neil Ruddock, Jason McAteer and upto £4 million for the 23-year-old. That might sway Sugar, who is reluctant to spend any more money in the transfer market after a summer spending campaign of almost £15 million.

Woodward hits out at lack of top-class talent in England

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

CLIVE WOODWARD painted a damning picture of the lack of genuine playing talent in England yesterday, four days before the rugby union international between England and New Zealand at Old Trafford. The national coach conceded that he could hope to field no more than two teams capable of extending the All Blacks, now generally acknowledged as the best team in the world.

It was a day for Woodward to confess his own shortcomings, after the disappointment of the drab 15-15 draw with Australia last Saturday. He also acknowledged criticism made by John Hart, coach to New Zealand, that the All Blacks were being required to play three England second-string XV's during their mid-week schedule.

"What John Hart says is correct and I agree with him," Woodward said. "But the stark reality is that we have two full Tests and three other fixtures and there is no way we can put out 60 players good enough to face New Zealand's two top sides."

In ideal circumstances, Woodward would have hoped to have four competitive divisional teams vying for a match, but he is not prepared to recommend fielding XV's that might concede 90 or 100 points to the All Blacks.

Woodward's problem is one that he shares with nearly every country in the world, so far have New Zealand elevated their playing standards above the rest. Scores of between 60 and 90 points have become commonplace, as Argentina and Ireland will testify this year, but Woodward's opinion is nevertheless at odds with that of Jack Rowell, his predecessor, who believed, after the England tour to Argentina last summer, that a strong playing base had been put in place.

"We are in an extremely serious situation and we know that when Roger [Utley] and I took over the management," Woodward said. "New Zealand have 150 contracted players, playing the right amount of games, which puts them massively ahead."

"I envy their players because they are part of a structure which allows them

to perform to their best. It's very hard for anyone without their system to compete against them. The guys I take my hat off to are the administrators, people like Hart, who have put them in that position."

"We in England are going through this exercise to see where we are. We have around 70 players in the first division [allowing for numerous overseas players], of whom we can dismiss 20 or 30 because they are just not good enough. We are short of ability, so we have selected the midweek teams for the right reasons, which is also a compliment to New Zealand and should allow their own second-choice players to improve."

It is Woodward's hope that the new Rugby Football Union administration will create a more favourable climate for

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Larder calls for unity 49
Fitzpatrick missing 49

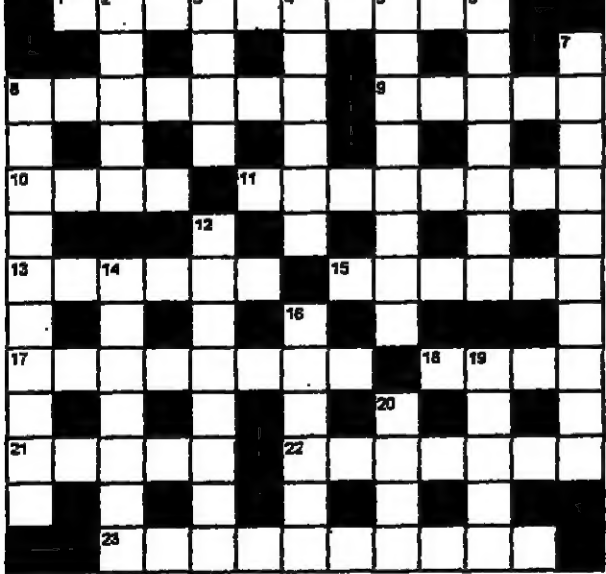
the national side, by improving the playing structure and emphasising the need for clubs to release players, not only for the senior representative sides but for the under-21s, whose development Woodward sees as critical to a healthy future.

"We haven't got anything like the academy team that England will play when we tour New Zealand next year," he said. "It's a totally different culture. New Zealand give their national team top priority. We haven't got there yet."

Nevertheless, Woodward will sit down this morning to announce his team to play New Zealand on Saturday, having digested the lessons of the match against Australia and the game last night between England's "emerging players" and the All Blacks at Huddersfield.

The prime message from the game against Australia was the need for a more potent scrumgame. However, Woodward said: "It was a learning week for me. With hindsight, I don't think we prepared very well. Perhaps we tried to do too much in training, tried to fit too much in, which may have confused the players."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1255

ACROSS

- 1 Four countries (5,5)
- 8 Indignant state, always (4)
- 9 Bow: river/tributary zone (3)
- 10 A macramé: a wax impress (4)
- 11 Slightly salty (water) (8)
- 13 Make steep rope descent (6)
- 15 Piece starting beside rook (6)
- 17 One attending monarch (8)
- 18 Hit (two): bit of ticket (4)
- 21 Give the slip to (5)
- 22 Take the chair (7)
- 23 Wrecked with ice (2,3,5)

DOWN

- 2 Many-headed monster (5)
- 3 Stagger: country dance (4)
- 4 Bleak (weather) (6)
- 5 Ruddy (complexion) (8)
- 6 Stylist: hurrying (7)
- 7 Available to eat, discuss (2,3,5)
- 8 Posted; finished; killed (10)
- 12 A salve (8)
- 14 With indistinct outline (painting) (7)
- 16 Folk (6)
- 19 Piece of conjuring (5)
- 20 Brave person (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1254

ACROSS: 1 Rice 3 Shatter 5 Queue 10 Panache 11 Impinge 12 Cruz 14 Avary 16 Absorb 18 Step 19 Haggard 22 Draught 23 Zaire 24 Suspense 25 Tent DOWN: 1 Requite 2 Cheap in trays 4 Hopper 5 Minicab 6 Once upon a time 7 Keen 8 Dean 13 Obedient 15 Rapture 17 Shears 20 Gaze 21 Odds

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Uefa takes new look at video issue



Irwin suffered ligament damage

THE use of television evidence in disciplinary matters is to be reviewed by Uefa, the governing body of European football. The move has been initiated after Paul Bosvelt, the Feyenoord midfielder player, escaped punishment for his tackle on Denis Irwin, of Manchester United, in the European Cup Champions' League match two weeks ago.

Uefa says that it cannot discipline the player because the incident was not noted by any of its officials at the match, which United won 3-1 two weeks ago.

Television cameras captured Bosvelt stamping on Irwin's left knee and the United defender will be out until Christmas with ligament damage. In Great Britain, television evidence is often used

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

to punish players and Uefa admits that perhaps it is time it followed suit.

"The evidence used came from the reports from the officials at the game, but nothing was mentioned in them and that is why the player received no sanction," a Uefa spokeswoman said.

"For the moment, it is not our policy to use television evidence and we are in line with Fifa on that. We've never used it before, but that could change and at the moment it is under discussion."

"As TV evidence can't be used legally in these matters, we are unable to take action against the player. The issue of TV and video replays will be discussed within Uefa in

the coming months. Our lawyers will need to take a long hard look before we can think of introducing them as evidence."

Bosvelt was not even booked because Sandor Puhl, the referee, did not see the incident, although he was substituted immediately afterwards. The player has since described the tackle as "the biggest error of my career."

The Uefa spokesman said: "We received reports from the officials, but they apparently didn't see anything — therefore no action is to be taken against the Dutch player."

"There was nothing mentioned in the report from the delegate, the referee and the linesman or the observer so we can't make any legal move against the player."

Coaches move out of the slow lane

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

WHILE it may be stretching a point to say that Kelly Holmes has developed into one of the leading middle-distance runners in the world courtesy of a grandfather's pension, British athletics has been dependent too long, in its quest for medals, on amateur coaches paying for the privilege of working with elite performers. Some of the hobby element is about to be removed.

In a programme announced yesterday, the coaches of Great Britain's best prospects for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney were awarded £450,000 over the next three years. Too often these coaches have been unable to give the athletes the attention they need because they could not afford it.

The new money may be used, for example, to assist the passage of coaches abroad for winter training with their

athletes. Dave Arnold, the coach of Holmes, would have been in South Africa last winter, but he had to watch his pocket. Instead, he coached her by phone and fax machine.

Arnold, a pensioner with seven grandchildren, spends thousands of pounds annually coaching Holmes and 14 other athletes aged 12 and upwards. Now he can apply, through Holmes, for up to £10,000 a year in assistance.

"It is nice to think that, in spite of all the problems that have occurred with the BAF (British Athletic Federation) going bust, coaches are going to be looked after more than

they have in the past," Arnold said. Arnold, 63, does not add up the money he spends on travel to training and competition, phone calls and equipment. "You just pay it out because you love the sport," he said.

"You just do it, don't you? I have a guaranteed pension income but it is tight. There are a lot of coaches who can do a better job if they have got the funds."

While the BAF is in administration, this scheme is financed by the World Class Performance programme, which is funded by the National Lottery and is immune from the governing body's crisis. The money comes from

the £14 million a year made available for development of the sport and will be administered by Performance Athlete Services Ltd, the performance arm of British athletics.

This is the first new programme financed by lottery money, although some have been used to pay the salaries of the BAF's performance and technical directors, and support staff. Fifteen athletes have been named as eligible to apply for personal coach funding. The list can change depending on performance.

Iwan Thomas, the British 400 metres record-holder, who is one of the athletes on the list, is pleased that his coach, Mike Smith, will have his burden eased. "Mike comes training every night and nobody pays him anything," Thomas said. "I know he needs a new car. Perhaps he could use the money for that."



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